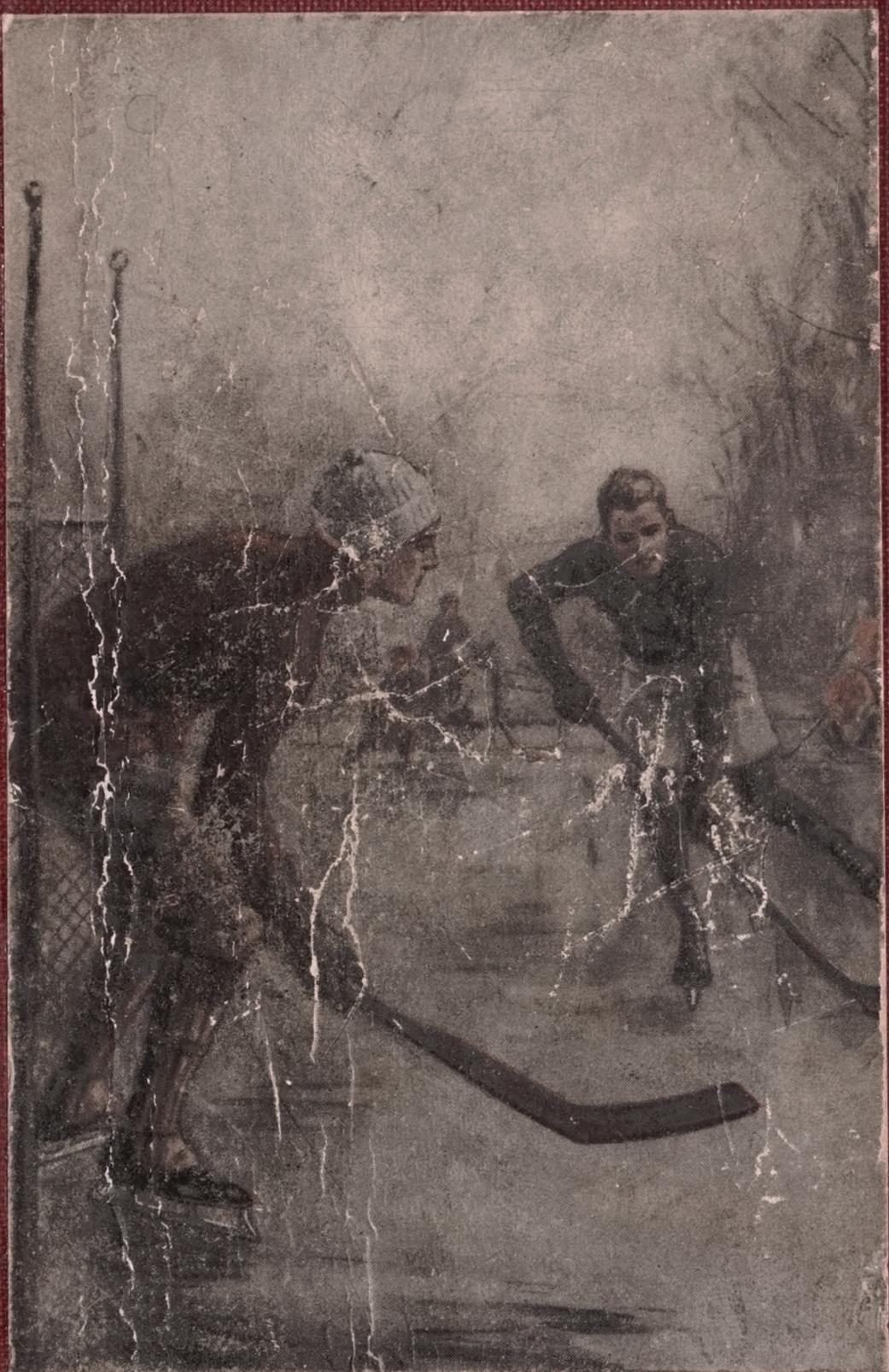


GUARDING HIS GOAL



RALPH HENRY BARBOUR





GUARDING HIS GOAL

By Ralph Henry Barbour

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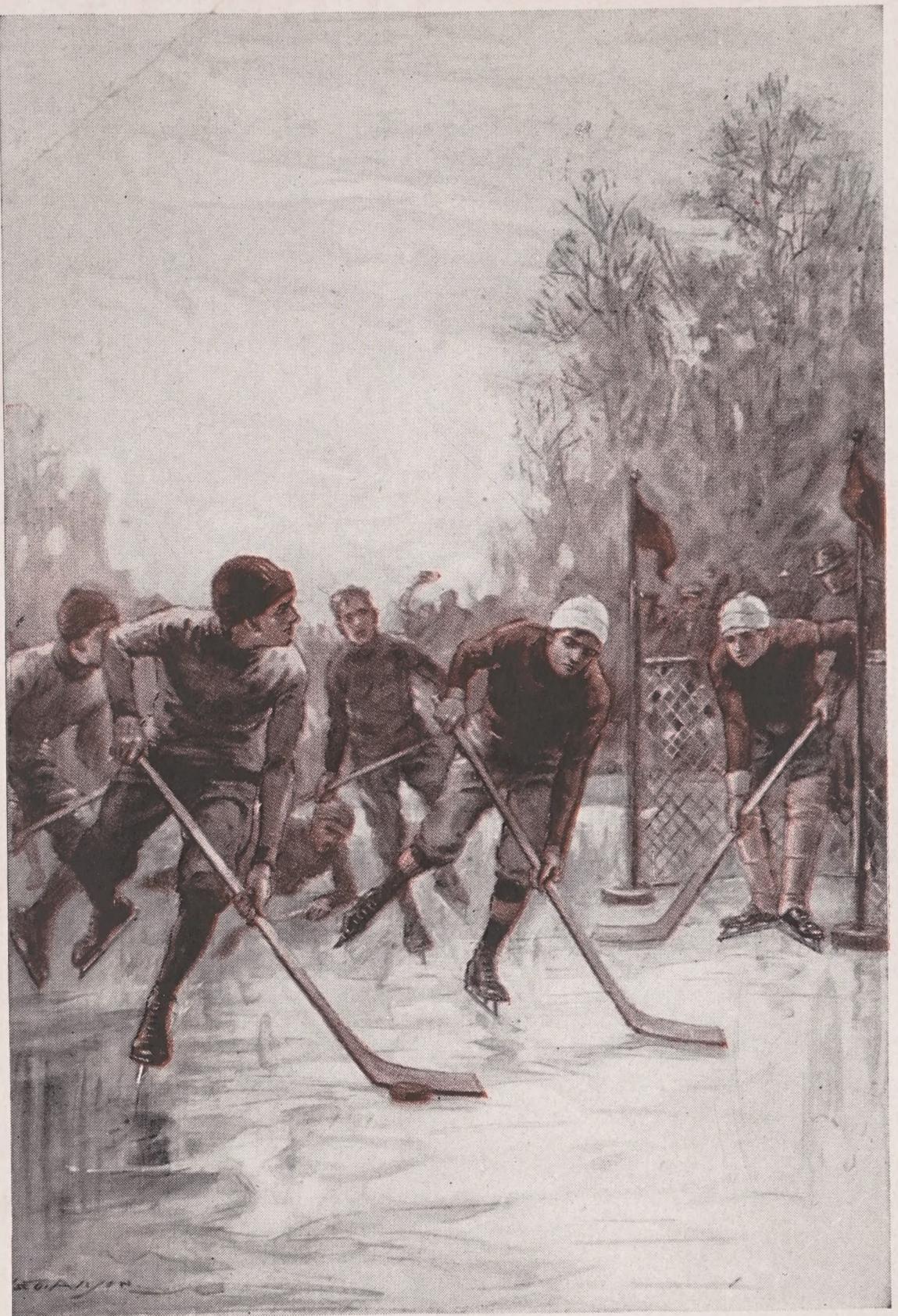
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D. APPLETON & CO., Publishers, New York



TOBY, A LITTLE PALE, CROUCHED AND WATCHED

[PAGE 290]

GUARDING HIS GOAL

BY
RALPH HENRY BARBOUR
AUTHOR OF



**ILLUSTRATED BY
GEORGE AVISON**

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CONTENTS

CHAPTER	PAGE
I. INTRODUCING OUR HERO	1
II. OFF FOR HOME	14
III. THE MAN IN THE BROWN OVERCOAT	31
IV. THE CAPTURE	49
V. CHRISTMAS DAYS	61
VI. FRIENDS FALL OUT	73
VII. FIRST PRACTICE	90
VIII. THE SCHOLARSHIP AWARDS	107
IX. T. TUCKER PLAYS GOAL	119
X. WITH THE FIRST TEAM	135
XI. TRADE FALLS OFF	150
XII. THE MARKED COIN	164
XIII. TOMMY LINGARD EXPLAINS	187
XIV. A QUESTION OF COLOR	199
XV. TOBY ENTERTAINS	212
XVI. ABSENT FROM CHAPEL	223
XVII. THE GRAY CARD	238
XVIII. IN THE OFFICE	251
XIX. A PAIR OF GLOVES	264
XX. CAPTAIN AND COACH	280
XXI. THE RESCUE	299
XXII. THINGS COME OUT ALL RIGHT	316

ILLUSTRATIONS

Toby, a little pale, crouched and watched

Frontispiece

FACING
PAGE

“That’s funny,” he murmured 168

“Let her come!” laughed Toby 242

“Coming! Hold on a little longer!” 314

GUARDING HIS GOAL

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCING OUR HERO

T. TUCKER

Clothes Cleaned and Pressed

PLEASE LEAVE ORDERS IN BOX

UCH was the legend, neatly inscribed on a small white card, that met the gaze of the visitor to Number 22 Whitson. As Number 22 was the last room on the corridor, and as the single light was at the head of the stairway, the legend was none too legible after nightfall, and the boy who had paused in front of it to regain his breath after a hurried ascent of the two steep flights had difficulty in reading it. When he had deciphered it and glanced at the little cardboard box below, in which reposed a tiny scratch-pad and a stubby pencil, he smiled amusedly ere he raised his hand and rapped on the portal.

GUARDING HIS GOAL

"Come in!" called a voice from beyond the door, and the visitor turned the knob and entered.

The room was small, with a ceiling that sloped with the roof, and rather shabby. There was an iron cot at one side, and a small steamer trunk peeped out from beneath it. A bureau, grained in imitation of yellow oak, was across the room and bore a few photographs in addition to such purely useful articles as brushes and a comb and a little china box holding studs and sleeve-links. The room contained two chairs, although at first glance one seemed quite sufficient for the available space: an armchair boasting the remains of an upholstered seat and a straight-backed affair whose uncompromising lines were at the moment partly hidden by a suit of blue serge. The one remaining article of furniture was a deal table such as one finds in kitchens. It was a good-sized table and it stood against the wall at the right of the window embrasure and under the gas bracket. From the bracket extended a pipe terminating at a one-burner gas stove which, on a square of zinc, adorned one end of the table. On the stove was a smoothing iron of the sort known to tailors as a goose. A second such im-

INTRODUCING OUR HERO

plement was being pushed back and forth over an expanse of damp cloth in a little cloud of steam, hissing, but less alarmingly than the other sort of goose, and filling the room with a not unpleasant odor. The iron didn't stop in its travels to and fro, but its manipulator, a well-set-up boy of fifteen with very blue eyes and red-brown hair, looked around as the visitor entered.

"Hello," he said. "Sit down, please, and I'll be through this in a shake."

"No hurry." The visitor seated himself gingerly in the dilapidated armchair and draped a pair of gray trousers across his knees. While the boy at the table deftly lifted the dampened cloth and laid it over another part of the coat he was pressing and again pushed the hot iron back and forth, the visitor's gaze traveled about the little room in mild surprise. There were no pictures on the white walls, nothing in the shape of decoration beyond three gaudily colored posters. Two of them depicted heroic figures in football togs surmounting the word "Yardley" in big blue letters, and the third was an advertisement for an automobile, showing a car of gigantic size, inhabited by a half-dozen lilliputian men and

GUARDING HIS GOAL

women, perched precariously on the edge of a precipice. The boy holding the gray trousers hoped that the man at the wheel, who seemed to be admiring the view with no thought of danger, had his brakes well set! He hadn't known that anywhere in Yardley Hall School was there a room so absolutely unattractive and mean as Number 22. To be sure, Whitson was the oldest of all the dormitories and so one naturally wouldn't look for the modern conveniences found in Merle or Clarke or Dudley, but he had never suspected that Poverty Row, as the top floor of Whitson was factitiously called, held anything so abjectly hideous as the apartment of T. Tucker. Further reflections were cut short by his host, who, returning the iron to the stove and whisking the cloth aside, picked up the coat he had pressed, folded it knowingly and laid it on the foot of the bed. After which, plunging his hands into his trousers pockets, he faced the visitor inquiringly.

"Something you want done?" he asked briskly.

"Yes, if you can do it this evening," was the reply. "But you look pretty busy. It's just this pair of trousers, Tucker. I want to wear them away in the morning."

INTRODUCING OUR HERO

"All right, I'll do 'em. Cleaned or just pressed?" Toby Tucker took the garment and examined it with professional interest.

"Oh, just pressed. I don't think they're spotted. Are you sure you want to do them? You look sort of busy already." His glance went to the half-dozen coats and waistcoats and trousers lying about.

"I am," replied Toby cheerfully, "but I'll have these ready for you in the morning. Seven early enough?"

"Oh, yes, there's no chapel to-morrow, you know. If I'm not up just toss them in the room somewhere."

"All right. You're in Dudley, aren't you?"

"Yes, four. Crowell's the name."

"I know. You're hockey captain. I suppose it's hard to learn that game, isn't it?" Toby turned the light out under the burner and seated himself on the edge of the bed.

"Hockey?" asked Orson Crowell. "N-no, I don't think so. Of course a fellow's got to know how to skate a bit, and not mind being roughed, you know. The rest comes with practice. Thinking of trying it, Tucker?"

GUARDING HIS GOAL

"Me? No, I wouldn't have time. I just wondered. Arnold Deering's on the team, and he's talked a good deal about it."

"Oh, you know Arn?"

Toby nodded, hugging his knees up to his chin. "It was Arnold who got me to come here to school. His folks have a summer place over on Long Island where I live. Greenhaven. Ever been there?"

Crowell shook his head.

"Nice place," continued Toby thoughtfully. "Arnold and I got acquainted and he talked so much about this school that I just made up my mind I'd come here. So I did."

"Like it now you're here?" asked the other boy, smiling.

"Oh, yes! Yes, I'm glad I came, all right. Of course—" Toby glanced about the room—"I'm not what you'd call luxuriously fixed up here, but I've got the room to myself, and that's good, because if I had a room-mate he might object to my staying up all hours pressing clothes. Besides, it was just about the only room I could afford."

"Yes, I suppose it's just about all right for

INTRODUCING OUR HERO

"you," agreed the other dubiously. "Do you — do you do pretty well?"

"Fair. It gets me enough to keep going on. I don't charge much, you see, and it's easier for fellows to bring their things to me than to take them to the village or over to Greenburg. It was sort of hard getting started. Fellows thought at first I couldn't do it, I guess. But now they keep me pretty busy. To-day's been a whopper. Every one wants his things pressed to go home in. I'm almost done, though. Only got three more suits — and these trousers of yours. Those won't take me long. I'll be through in a couple of hours."

"I shouldn't think you'd have time to do anything else," commented Crowell. "When do you get outdoors? And how about studying?"

"Oh, I have plenty of time. I get up at six, and that gives me a good hour before chapel. And then I have another hour at eleven, and, since football's been over, an hour or so in the afternoon."

"Did you go out for football?"

"Yes, I had a try at it. I was on the second about three weeks and then they dropped me and

GUARDING HIS GOAL

I played on my class team. It was lots of fun, but it took too much time."

"Yes, it does take time," granted Crowell. "When I started in in my second year I was in trouble with the office all the time."

"I'd certainly like to be able to play it the way you do," said Toby admiringly. "I guess it takes a lot of practice, though."

"Oh, I'm not much good at it," responded Crowell, modestly. "Did you see the Broadwood game?"

"No, I didn't have time. And it cost too much. I wanted to, though. I'll see it next year, when they play here."

Crowell had been studying the younger boy interestedly while they talked and liked what he saw. There was something very competent in the youngster's looks, and the blue eyes expressed a fearlessness that, taken in conjunction with the determination shown by the square chin, argued results. He had a round, somewhat tanned face, a short nose and hair that, as before hinted, only just escaped being red instead of brown. (It didn't do to more than hint regarding the color of Toby Tucker's hair, for Toby was touchy on the

INTRODUCING OUR HERO

subject and had fought more than one battle to emphasize the fact that it was distinctly brown and could not by any stretch of imagination be termed red!) For the rest, Toby was well built, healthy and strong, and rather larger than most boys of his age.

"Look here," said Crowell suddenly. "How are you at skating, Tucker?"

"Oh, I can skate."

"Done much of it?"

"Yes, I skate a lot, but I don't know much fancy business."

"Why don't you try hockey then? You'd like it awfully. It's a ripping sport."

"I'd be afraid I'd fall over one of those sticks you push around," laughed Toby.

"Maybe you would at first," said Crowell, smiling, "but you'd soon get the hang of it. You look to me like a fellow who'd be clever about learning a thing. How old are you, any how? Sixteen, I suppose."

"Not yet. Fifteen."

"Fourth Class, then?" Toby nodded and Crowell frowned. "Well, that wouldn't matter. Young Sterling played on the second last

GUARDING HIS GOAL

year when he was in the fourth. Now, look here — ”

“ All right,” said Toby, jumping up, “ but while we’re talking I might be pressing those pants of yours. If you’ll stick around about ten minutes I’ll have them for you. Would you mind waiting that long? ”

“ Not a bit. Go ahead. What I was going to say was, why don’t you come out for practice after vacation, Tucker? Of course, I can’t promise you a place on the second, but if you can skate fairly well and will learn to use a stick, I don’t see why you mightn’t make it.”

Toby spread the trousers on the board and picked up the cloth. “ Why, I guess I’d love to play,” he responded doubtfully, “ but I don’t know if I’d have time. I dare say you have to practice a good deal every day, don’t you? ”

“ About an hour and a half, usually. Think it over. Candidates have been working in the gym for a fortnight now, but you wouldn’t have missed much. You’d meet up with a lot of fine chaps, too, Tucker. And, if you want to think of it that way, you might drum up more trade! ” Crowell concluded with a chuckle, and Toby smiled an-

INTRODUCING OUR HERO

sweringly as he began to press the hot iron along the cloth.

"I'll think it over, thanks," he said after a moment. "Of course, a fellow has to do something in winter to get him out, anyway, and maybe hockey's more fun than just skating, eh? I guess I wouldn't be good enough for your second team, but I sort of think I'd like to try. Maybe another year I'd be better at it."

"If you missed the second you might make a class team. They have some good games and a heap of fun. You tell Arn Deering what I say. Tell him I said he was to bring you out after you get back."

"All right, I'll tell him," agreed Toby. "He's been after me, anyway. To try hockey, I mean. Does it cost much?"

"No. You've got skates, I suppose? Well, all you need is something to wear. The club supplies sticks. Three or four dollars will do it. Do you know, Tucker, I fancy you might make a pretty good goal?"

"Goal?" repeated Toby in alarm. "To shoot the puck at?"

"I mean goal-tend," laughed Crowell. "But

GUARDING HIS GOAL

it amounts to much the same. You get shot at all right!"

"But you don't do much skating if you mind goal, do you?" objected Toby.

"Not a great deal, but it's a hard position to play well, son. Good goal-tenders are scarcer than hens' teeth!"

"I wouldn't mind trying it," said the other.
"Where do you play, Crowell?"

"We have a couple of rinks down by the river, beyond the tennis courts. Sometimes the class teams play on the river, but you can't always be certain of your ice there. We're going to have a hard time beating Broadwood this year, for they've got two peachy players. Either one is better than any chap we have. Hello, all done?"

"Yes. They aren't very dry yet, so you'd better spread them out when you get them home so they won't wrinkle."

"Thanks. How much?"

"Fifteen cents, please."

"That's not much. Got a dime handy?"
Toby made the change and Orson Crowell, draping his trousers over his arm, turned to the door.
"You make up your mind to try hockey, Tucker,"

INTRODUCING OUR HERO

he advised again from the portal. "I'll look for you after vacation. Don't forget!"

"I won't, thanks. I'll see what Deering says. If he really thinks I'd have any chance I'll have a go at it. Good-night."

"Good-night. Hope you get your work done in time to get some sleep, Tucker. You look a bit fagged."

"I guess I am," muttered Toby as the door closed behind the hockey captain, "but I wouldn't have thought of it if he hadn't mentioned it. Well, it's only a quarter past eight and there's not much left. Now then, you pesky blue serge, let's see what your trouble is!"

CHAPTER II

OFF FOR HOME

YARDLEY Hall School ended its Fall Term that year on the twenty-first of December, after breakfast, and by nine o'clock the hill was deserted and the little station at Wissining presented a crowded and busy appearance as at least three-quarters of the school's three hundred and odd students strove to purchase tickets, to check baggage and to obtain a vantage point near the edge of the platform from which to pile breathlessly into the express and so make certain of a seat for the ensuing two-hour journey to New York. A few of the fellows, who were to travel in the other direction, were absent, for the east-bound train left nearly an hour later, but they weren't missed from that seething, noisy crowd. Of course much the same thing happened three times each year, but you wouldn't have guessed it from the hopeless, helpless manner in which the station officials strove to meet the requirements of

OFF FOR HOME

the situation. Long after the express, making a special stop at Wissining, whistled warningly down the track, boys were still clamoring at the ticket window and clutching at the frantic baggage master. How every one got onto the train, and how all the luggage, piled on four big trucks, was tossed into the baggage car in something under eighty seconds was a marvel. From the windows of the parlor cars and day coaches wondering countenances peered out at the unusual scene, and as the first inrush of boys invaded the good car *Hyacinth* a nervous old lady seized her reticule and sat on it, closed her eyes, folded her hands and awaited the worst!

Toby Tucker, a rather more presentable citizen than the one who had received Orson Crowell in Number 22 Whitson last evening, was one of the first to claim sanctuary in the *Hyacinth*. This was not due to his own enterprise so much as to the fact that a slightly bigger youth had taken him by the shoulders and, using him as a battering-ram, had cleaved a path from platform to vestibule. Toby did not ordinarily travel in parlor cars, but this morning his objections had been overruled, and presently he found himself, some-

GUARDING HIS GOAL

what dishevelled and out of breath, seated in a revolving chair upholstered in uncomfortably scratchy velvet with an ancient yellow valise on his knees.

"Put that thing down," laughed the occupant of the next chair, pushing his own more modern suitcase out of the aisle. "Gee, that was a riot, wasn't it? Here we go!" The train started and Toby, not a little excited, saw the station move past the broad window, caught a final fleeting glimpse of the village and then found the river beneath them. A minute later the express roared disdainfully through Greenburg and set off in earnest for New Haven and New York. "Two whole weeks of freedom!" exulted his companion. "No more Latin, no more math, no more English comp —"

"And no more French!" added Toby feelingly. "And no more clothes to clean, either. I guess it will take me more than a week to get rid of the smell of benzine. I stayed up until after ten last night, Arnold. I wanted to press my own things, but I was too tired. Does this suit look very bad?"

"Bad? No, it looks corking," replied Arnold

OFF FOR HOME

Deering. "It gets me how you can buy a suit of clothes for about fifteen dollars and have it look bully, when I have to pay twenty-five and then look like the dickens. Look at these togs, will you? You'd think I'd had them two or three years!"

"When a fellow hangs his clothes on the floor the way you do," laughed Toby, "he shouldn't expect them to look very nice. Why didn't you bring that up yesterday and let me go over it?"

"Because I knew you had more than you could do, T. Tucker. Besides, you never let me pay you, you chump."

"Well, if you're going to wear your things all mussed up you can pay me all you want to. Say, how much does this cost?"

"What?"

"Why, this parlor car business?"

"Oh, about a half. It's my treat, like I've told you once."

"Oh, no—" began Toby. But Arnold drowned out his protest.

"Listen, Toby: you're coming back to New York the day after Christmas, aren't you?"

"No, that's Sunday; I'll come Monday."

"But, hang it, that's too late! There are piles

GUARDING HIS GOAL

of things we've got to do. Why, that only gives us a week!"

"I know, but I've got to be at home some of the time, Arn. I thought I'd come up and stay with you from Monday to Saturday and then go back to Greenhaven until Tuesday."

"Oh, feathers! Well, all right, but if you're going to do that you've got to stay with me until day after to-morrow."

Toby smiled and shook his head. "I can't, Arn, honestly. I wrote mother I'd be back to-morrow afternoon. Besides, I haven't anything to wear except what I've got on. Everything else is in my trunk."

"You don't need anything else. If you did I could lend it to you. Have a heart, Toby. Why, I haven't seen you for more than a minute at a time for a whole week!"

"That wasn't my fault, Arn. You knew where to find me."

"Of course, but it's no fun sitting up in your attic and watching you press trousers or mess around with smelly stuff on the roof. Say, I wrote dad to get some tickets to the theater for to-night. Wonder what he will get them for.

OFF FOR HOME

I'm going to buy a paper and see what the shows are."

When Arnold had disappeared down the aisle Toby produced a pocket-book and gravely and a trifle anxiously examined the contents. To-morrow he meant to go shopping for presents for the folks in Greenhaven, and the subject of funds was an important one. The pocket-book held four folded bills and quite a pile of silver and small coins, but when Toby had carefully counted it all up the result was not reassuring. He had his fare to Greenhaven to pay to-morrow, his fare to New York on Monday, his fare back to Greenhaven the last of the week, and, finally, his fare all the way to Wissining the following Tuesday. He would not, he thought grimly, be riding in a parlor car on that return trip! The funds in hand consisted of exactly twelve dollars and forty-eight cents. Toby replaced the pocket-book, drew out a little black memorandum and a pencil and proceeded to figure. He frowned frequently during the procedure, and once he sighed disappointedly. After traveling expenses had been allowed for only seven dollars and a half remained, and seven dollars and a half wasn't nearly as much as

GUARDING HIS GOAL

he had hoped to be able to expend for Christmas presents. Why, the shaving set he had meant to give his father would cost all of five dollars, and that would leave but two dollars and a half with which to purchase presents for his mother and his sister Phebe and Long Tim and Shorty Joe and — Oh dear, he had quite forgotten Arnold!

He turned some pages in the memorandum book and read thoughtfully down the list of items there. "Beech, .85; Framer, .30; Williams, .45; Hove, .15; Lamson, 1.05; Hurd, .45." He stopped, although there were more entries, and went back to that Lamson item. Frank was on the train somewhere and perhaps he might be persuaded to pay up. He had owed most of that dollar-five since October and ought to be willing to settle. If he had that it would help considerably. And perhaps he could find Beach too. He considered a minute and then left his seat and surveyed the car. There was quite a sprinkling of fellows he knew by sight or well enough to speak to there, but Frank Lamson was not of them. He started off toward the rear of the train. Near the door he spoke to a boy in a shiny derby and a wonderful brown overcoat.

OFF FOR HOME

"Hello, Tucker! What say? Frank Lamson? Yes, I saw him on the platform. He's here somewhere, I guess. Unless he got left!" Jim Rose chuckled. "But I don't suppose he did. I never knew him to!"

Toby passed on to the next car and wormed his way between boys and bags, nodding occasionally, speaking once or twice, but without success until he sighted a tall, thin youth of eighteen who sat with his long legs almost doubled to his chin, reading a paper. Toby leaned over the back of his chair. "I say, Beech, would it be convenient for you to let me have that eighty-five cents? I'm sort of short just now, or I wouldn't ask you for it."

Grover Beech looked up a bit startledly from the morning paper. "Eh? Oh, that you, Tucker? Eighty-five cents?" Beech's countenance grew troubled. "I'm awfully afraid I can't, old man. I'm just about stone broke. Tell you what, though; I'll send it to you to-morrow." Perhaps the expression of disappointment on Toby's face touched him then, for he hesitated, thrust a hand into his pocket and brought it out filled with change. "Never mind," he said. "I've got it here, I guess. If I run short I'll

GUARDING HIS GOAL

make a touch somewhere. Here you are. Fifty, sixty, seventy — mind some coppers? — eighty — and five is eighty-five. That right?"

"Yes, thanks. I wouldn't have asked for it, only —"

"That's all right, old man." Beech waved a slim hand. "Glad to pay when I can. When I get back I'll start another bill! Merry Christmas, Tucker. Say, where do you live, eh?"

"Greenhaven, Long Island," replied Toby, carefully scoring out the item of indebtedness in his little book and then as carefully dropping the coins into his purse.

"That's near by, eh? Lucky guy! I've got to go all the way to Baltimore. Beastly trip. Be good, Tucker. So long!"

Encouraged, Toby continued his explorations. Half-way along the next car he discovered his quarry. Frank Lamson, a big-framed youth of sixteen, with very black hair and dark eyes in a good-looking if somewhat saturnine face, was seated on the arm of a chair, one of a group of four or five who were laughing and chatting together. Toby hesitated about broaching the subject of his errand under the circumstances, but

OFF FOR HOME

Frank happened to look up at the moment and greeted him.

"Hello, Toby," he called in his usual patronizing and slightly ironical way. "How's business? Pressing?"

The joke won laughter from the others of the group, one boy, seated on an upturned suit-case, almost losing his balance. Toby smiled. The joke was an old one and he had become used to smiling at it.

"No," he replied, "business isn't pressing, Frank, but bills are. I wish you'd let me have a dollar and five cents, will you? I need some money pretty badly."

Frank Lamson frowned and then laughed. "So do I, Toby, old scout. Need it like anything. Bet you a dollar I need it more than you do."

"I don't believe you do," answered Toby soberly. "I wouldn't ask you for it, Frank, but I'm pretty short —"

"You'll grow, Tucker," said the boy on the suit-case, with a giggle.

"Toby," said Frank blandly, "I'd pay you in a minute if I had the money. But I've only just got

GUARDING HIS GOAL

enough to get home on. As it is, I'll probably have to borrow from the butler to pay the taxi man! I'll settle up right after vacation, though, honest Injun. How'll that do?"

"I'd rather have it now," replied Toby, "or some of it. Suppose you pay fifty cents on account?"

"Fifty cents! My word, the fellow talks like a millionaire! Say, Toby, if you're short go and borrow some from Arnold. He's simply rolling in wealth. He always is. And, say, if he comes across, touch him for a couple of dollars for me, will you?"

"Me, too," laughed another boy.

"I wish you would, Frank," said Toby earnestly. "Honest, I do need the money. And — and you've been owing it for some time now, you know."

"Oh, cut it, Tucker!" exclaimed Frank crossly. "This is no time to dun a chap for a few pennies. Why didn't you come around last week if you needed it so much? Besides, that last job of cleaning you did was beastly. Every spot came right back again. I'll leave it to Watkins. You saw the suit, didn't you, Chet?"

OFF FOR HOME

Watkins, a stout youth who wore a pair of rubber-rimmed spectacles and looked like a rather stupid owl, nodded obediently. "Rotten job, I'd call it," he murmured.

Toby flushed. "I'm sorry," he answered stiffly. "If you'd brought the things back again —"

"I had to wear them. But you oughtn't to charge me fifty cents for a bum job like that. Still, I'll pay — later. Cut along now, old scout. Don't obtrude vulgar money matters on such a gladsome occasion, what?"

Toby hesitated. Then: "All right, Frank," he said quietly. "Sorry I troubled you. Hope you have a Merry Christmas."

"Same to you, Toby! Just remind me of that little matter when we get back, will you?" He winked at the audience and elicited grins. "I mean well, but I'm awfully forgetful. Bye, bye, honey!"

When Toby got back to his seat he found Arnold very busy with his New York paper, and for the next ten minutes they discussed theaters. Toby, however, was thinking more of the financial problem that confronted him than of the eve-

GUARDING HIS GOAL

ning's amusement, and Arnold found him disappointingly unresponsive when he dwelt on the possibility of seeing this play or that. In the end he tossed the paper aside and acknowledged the truth of Toby's remark to the effect that it didn't do any good deciding what play he wanted to see most if his father had already purchased the tickets. For his part, Toby added, he would enjoy anything, for he had never been to a real theater but twice in his life. That afforded Arnold an opportunity to reminisce, which he did for a good ten minutes while Toby pretended to listen but was in reality wondering how to make eight dollars and thirty-five cents do the work of fifteen!

Arnold Deering was sixteen years old, Toby's senior by one year. He was a good-looking chap, with the good looks produced by regularly formed features such as a straight nose, a rounded chin, brown eyes well apart and a high forehead made seemingly higher by brushing the dark brown hair straight back from it. Arnold's hair always looked as if he had arisen from a barber's chair the moment before. Some of the summer's tan still remained, and altogether Arnold looked healthy, normal and likable. He was fairly tall

OFF FOR HOME

and rather slender, but there was well developed muscle under the smooth skin and his slimness was that of the athlete in training.

Later, by which time the train was running smoothly through the winter fields and woods of Larchmont and Pelham, Toby told of Orson Crowell's visit and their talk, and Arnold's eyes opened very wide. "Why, that's bully!" he exclaimed. "If Orson talked that way, Toby, he means to help you. I wouldn't be surprised if he took you on the scrub team if you showed any sort of playing. He doesn't often go out of his way to be nice to fellows. I call that lucky! Of course you'll have a try, after what he told you!"

"I'd like to, but it would take a lot of time, Arn. You know I didn't go to Yardley just to play hockey and things. I — I've got to make enough money to come back next year."

"Oh, piffle, Toby! What does an hour's practice in the afternoon amount to? Besides, you played football, and that took more time than hockey. Don't be an idiot. Why, say, I'll bet you anything you like that you'll find yourself on the scrub before the season's over. And that would be doing mighty well for a fourth class fel-

GUARDING HIS GOAL

low! You'd be almost sure of making the school team next year, Toby!"

"But how do I know I could play hockey? I can skate pretty well; just ordinary skating, you know, without any frills —"

"You don't need the frills in hockey. What you need is to be able to stay on your feet and skate hard and — and be a bit tricky."

"Tricky?"

"Yes, I mean able to dodge and make a fellow think you're going to do one thing and then do another. But staying on your feet is the main thing."

"And the hardest, I guess. Crowell seemed to think I could play goal, as he called it."

"We-ell, maybe," responded Arnold cautiously. "Goal, to my mind, is the toughest position on the team. You wouldn't have to skate so much, but you'd have to be mighty quick on your feet. And mighty cool, too. But I guess you'd be cool, all right. I never saw you really excited yet!"

"How about the time we went after the thieves that stole the Trainors' launch that time and they tried to pot us from the beach?" laughed Toby.

OFF FOR HOME

"Huh! You weren't excited even then! And I guess a fellow that can stay cool when the bullets are knocking chips off the boat can keep his head even when nine or ten wild Indians are banging into the net and slashing his feet with their sticks! Blessed if I don't believe Orson Crowell's right, Toby! I guess you're a born goal-tend!"

"You and Crowell are sort of jumping at conclusions, I guess," replied Toby. "I'm not even certain I could stop a puck if it came at me."

"Sure you could. It isn't hard."

"You just said it was!"

"Well, I mean it isn't hard when you know how. Anyway, you're going to report for hockey the day we get back if I have to lug you all the way to the rink!"

"Think there'll be ice by that time?" asked Toby.

"I don't know. It doesn't look like it now. It's been an awfully mild sort of winter so far. I wish it would snow for Christmas, don't you? Christmas doesn't seem like Christmas without snow. I'll bet it's dandy around your place in winter, eh?"

"There's plenty of winter," laughed Toby.

GUARDING HIS GOAL

"It gets frightfully cold over there sometimes. Arn, if your father will let you you'll come over for a few days, won't you?"

"Surest thing you know," replied the other promptly. "I've promised six or eight times, haven't I? But he won't, I guess. You see, since mother died, dad likes to have me around at Christmas and times like that. Still, he might. We'll ask him to-night, eh?"

"All right. Isn't this the tunnel? We'd better get our coats on, hadn't we? Don't you let me get lost when we get in there!"

CHAPTER III

THE MAN IN THE BROWN OVERCOAT

ARNOLD'S house was only a five-minute ride from the station, and Toby, to whom the city was unfamiliar and vastly entertaining, wished it had been farther. His enjoyment of the sights, however, was somewhat dampened by the seeming recklessness of the taxi-cab driver, and more than once he started to his feet to be ready to meet death standing. It kept Arnold quite busy pulling him back to the seat. Arnold's Aunt Alice, who, since his mother's death, had kept house for Mr. Deering, was the only one to welcome them, aside from the servants, for Arnold's father did not return from his down town office until the middle of the afternoon. Toby was conducted by Arnold and a man-servant with a striped waistcoat and a maid-servant with apron and cap and Aunt Alice's spaniel, San Toy, into an elevator, past two floors, along a hall and at last into a great wonderful room that quite took

GUARDING HIS GOAL

his breath away. It was all very exciting and confusing and jolly, and San Toy, entering into the spirit of the occasion, barked so hard that he lifted his front paws from the floor! And after the servants had deposited the bags and coats and gone away, Arnold pulled Toby through a door into his own room adjoining and they looked from the windows over a vast expanse of trees and lawn and winding paths and shimmering lakes which Arnold said was Central Park and which Toby accepted as such and vowed that he could never tire of looking at it. After luncheon they went for a walk there, but soon hurried back to the house to meet Mr. Deering who had telephoned that he would be home an hour earlier than usual.

Arnold's father was so nice to Toby and seemed so glad to have him there that Toby forgot much of the embarrassment that had affected him on his arrival and actually found himself sitting down in a big velvet-cushioned chair without, for once, wondering whether he would damage it! Mr. Deering was rather stout, with grizzled hair and a most carefully trimmed mustache. Toby fancied that he could be very crisp and even stern

THE BROWN OVERCOAT

in his office, but at home he was jovial and kindly and one might easily have concluded that for the time at least he had nothing in the world to do but invent and provide amusement for the two eager-eyed boys just out of school. The big limousine car was summoned, and every one, including Aunt Alice and San Toy, piled into it, and were whisked away northward over smooth pavements, along a blue-gray river, over a great bridge and into the country. Long before they turned back the sun had gone down behind sullen clouds and when they reached the town again the lights were twinkling down the long streets. And then, to Arnold's loudly expressed delight, when they got out of the car at the house little flecks of snow were falling and the evening had grown quite cold. From that time until dinner was ready Arnold made frequent trips to the windows and always returned with the cheering news that "it was still at it."

A wonderful dinner that! Toby, viewing so many forks and knives and spoons and plates with dire misgiving, felt extremely uneasy for the first few minutes for fear he might use the wrong utensil. But Aunt Alice came to his rescue. "It

GUARDING HIS GOAL

doesn't matter, Toby," she said, "which fork or spoon you use. I don't think Arnold ever gets them just right himself." And Mr. Deering laughingly suggested that Toby might follow the example of the man who, finding himself left with two unused spoons, saved the situation by dropping them in his pocket! After dinner the car rolled up again and they went off to the theater. To Arnold's joy the play was the one he had decided he wanted most to see, and Mr. Deering gravely explained the coincidence by mental telepathy and got Toby very interested and astonished before the latter discovered that it was just a joke. But perhaps Toby didn't enjoy that play! It was absolutely beautiful and astounding and thrilling from the rise of the first curtain to the lamentable fall of the last, and, although to prolong the gayety they stopped at a gorgeous restaurant and ate things, Toby couldn't remember afterwards what he had had, or much of anything except the play. He would have stayed awake half the rest of the night — it was already well past midnight when they reached home again — talking it over with Arnold if that unfeeling brute hadn't fallen to sleep almost immediately.

THE BROWN OVERCOAT

They awoke in the morning, frightfully and deliciously late, to find the world carpeted with a good inch of snow. From the windows of Arnold's room on the front of the house the scene was like fairyland. Or so, at least, Toby declared. Every branch of every tree and shrub in the Park was frosted with snow and what had been grass yesterday was this morning an unsullied expanse of white. But to Arnold's disgust the sun was out, shining brilliantly if frostily, and already the streets were almost bare. Toby, though, declined to be down-hearted, reminding his chum that it would probably snow again to-morrow, and Arnold, on that understanding, concluded that life still held a faint promise of happiness and decided to get dressed and have some breakfast.

But they didn't spend much time at the table. One isn't extremely hungry at nine if one has supped at midnight, and, besides, both boys were eager to get out of doors. To Toby this forenoon was an important occasion, for he was to do his Christmas shopping, and when a chap has all of eight dollars to spend just as he sees fit he doesn't care to waste much time on such every-day things as breakfasts!

GUARDING HIS GOAL

They traveled downtown on the top of a bus, missing very little of the brilliant pageant set before them. The holiday spirit was in the air and the very city itself seemed sensible of the season's significance. The sunlight shone dazzlingly on patches of wet pavement, above the roofs clouds of white steam billowed up against a blue sky and everywhere was color and life. The windows of the shops were gorgeous with holiday displays and on all sides the scarlet of holly berries and the green of fir and pine met the eager eyes of the boys. The street was a solid stream of moving vehicles, dashing motor cars, lumbering busses, sedate carriages, rattling delivery wagons. Nickel and brass and shining varnish caught the sunlight. It was three days to Christmas, but one might have thought from the hurry and bustle of the busy shoppers that that important occasion was due no later than to-morrow. Toby was very thrilled and very excited by the time they disembarked, seemingly at the risk of their lives, at Thirty-fourth Street, and Arnold, although far more accustomed to the inspiring scene, found himself in a truly holiday mood.

Arnold was postponing his own shopping until

THE BROWN OVERCOAT

the next day in order that Toby, who was to continue on to Greenhaven in the afternoon, might have the services of his advice and assistance. Toby had ruefully confided to his chum that his capital was small and Arnold had decided that Fifth Avenue was not the place for purchasing. So, when they had gained the sidewalk in safety by what appeared to Toby nothing short of a miracle, they started away along the cross streets. They didn't make very rapid progress, though, for Toby found something fascinating in nearly every window, and more than once Arnold discovered himself alone and had to retrace his steps and drag the other away from rapt contemplation of a marvelous display. Toby's unbounded admiration and wonder pleased Arnold, and the latter thoroughly enjoyed exhibiting the marvels of his city to his friend. They were about midway of the block when Arnold missed Toby for perhaps the sixth time. He turned back, but none of the near-by windows reflected the countenance of T. Tucker. Arnold was about reaching the conclusion that Toby was lost when he suddenly caught a glimpse of that youth standing by the curbing. Arnold fought his way back to him.

GUARDING HIS GOAL

Toby was talking to a seedy looking man whose unshaven face and watery, shifty eyes inspired Arnold with anything but confidence. But he reached the scene too late, for Toby was already returning his purse to his pocket when Arnold seized his arm.

"Don't be a chump, Toby," he said impatiently. "That fellow's got more money right now than you have. How much did you give him?"

"Only a quarter," replied Toby gravely. "He hasn't had anything to eat for two days, and his wife's sick and—"

"I know! His grandmother's broken a leg and all his children have scarlet fever! Gee, you oughtn't to be trusted around this burg with any money in your pocket. The man's a professional beggar, you idiot!"

Toby looked both shocked and incredulous. "I don't think so, Arn," he protested. "If you'd heard him—"

"I've heard lots of them," returned the other impatiently. "You stay with me after this and keep your hand out of your pocket. If you're going to give money to all the beggars that ask

THE BROWN OVERCOAT

for it, you won't have a cent when you get into a store!"

"I just couldn't help giving him a little," said Toby. "Did you notice that he didn't have any overcoat? Why, his hands were blue with the cold, Arn!"

"Yes, and his nose was red with it — or something else. Toby, you're an awful green little yap, that's what you are!"

"What's a yap?" asked Toby untroubledly.

"It's what you are," laughed Arnold. "Come on in here and see what we can do. This is as reasonable as any place, I guess."

They pushed through a revolving door and found themselves in a big department store that was just about twice as crowded as the sidewalk had been. Arnold found a magnificent gentleman in a long black frock coat and asked his way to the cutlery department. While they were receiving directions some one tugged at Toby's coat, or seemed to, and he looked around. A man with a stubbly red mustache muttered an apology and pushed past, and Toby smiled forgivingly and followed Arnold through the throng. He had decided a week ago to pay as much as five dollars for

GUARDING HIS GOAL

a shaving set for his father, but that was before his discovery that just before Christmas was a bad time for collections! Now his limit was three dollars and he doubted that that amount would buy anything nice enough. But when the salesman began to place the goods before them on the counter Toby took heart. It was simply wonderful what you could get for a dollar and ninety-eight cents in this place! In the end he decided on a set costing two dollars and seventy-five cents — there was none for exactly three dollars — and put his hand into an overcoat pocket to get his purse out. The hand returned empty. The other hand went into the other pocket and fared no better and a look of surprise bordering on alarm overspread the boy's countenance.

"What's the matter?" asked Arnold.

"I can't find — my purse," gasped Toby, both hands probing diligently.

"You wouldn't have it there, would you?" asked Arnold anxiously. "Try your trousers, why don't you?"

"I — I'm pretty sure I dropped it into my overcoat pocket after I gave that man the quarter." Toby searched his other pockets, however,

THE BROWN OVERCOAT

to make certain, but without success. "It's gone!" he announced in utter dismay, staring blankly at his friend.

"Some one pinched it," said Arnold, with conviction. "What the dickens did you ever put it in an outside pocket for? Didn't you know that there were pickpockets in the world?"

"I—I guess I didn't think," murmured Toby disconsolately, still dipping unavailingly into various parts of his clothing. "It—it's clean gone, anyway. Here's where I put it."

"That was a swell place," said Arnold scathingly. "Here, I'll pay for this and you can pay me back some time."

The salesman, sympathetic but a trifle impatient, started to accept Arnold's money, but Toby interfered. "No, please, Arn! I'd rather not, thanks. I've lost my money and it's my own fault and—"

"But you've got to buy your presents! We'll go down to the office and get some more from dad. I've only got about three and a half."

"I'd rather not. I couldn't pay it back for a long while. I'll just have to tell the folks what

GUARDING HIS GOAL

happened, Arn. They won't mind — much — when they understand."

"But why not let me loan you enough for the razor set, anyway? You don't need to pay me back for a year, you silly chump!"

But Toby was obdurate. "I — maybe I'll come back for that later," he told the salesman apologetically. "Thanks for your trouble."

"That's all right," returned the man heartily. "It's too bad you lost it. You didn't feel anything, did you? I mean you wouldn't know where it happened?"

Toby's eyes narrowed and he stared for a moment straight ahead. Then, before Arnold could stop him, he had turned and was plunging determinedly through the crowd. Arnold hurried after him, sighting him now and then and finally reaching him near the entrance.

"Where are you going?" panted Arnold, seizing the other by the arm.

"I don't know," answered Toby thoughtfully. "Listen, Arn. While you were asking that man where the razors were I felt something tug at my coat and I looked around and there was a man pushing by me. He said he was sorry or some-

THE BROWN OVERCOAT

thing and — and beat it. I'll bet you anything he did it!"

"Of course he did! But what of it? You don't expect to find him waiting for you to come back, do you?"

Toby shook his head doubtfully. "No, I guess not. Only I thought he might be still around here. I'd know him in a minute if I saw him. Don't you think that maybe if we sort of walked around and kept our eyes open we might find him?"

"No, I certainly don't," said Arnold decidedly. "As soon as he got that purse of yours he hiked out for some other place, naturally."

"Oh!" murmured Toby disappointedly. "Where do you think he went?"

"Great Scott! How do I know? He might be just around the corner or he may be a mile away by this time. You might just as well make up your mind to doing without that money, Toby. I'm awfully sorry, old man. And I do wish you'd let me lend you some. It's perfectly silly not to. If it was I who had lost my purse I'd take a loan from you in a minute."

Toby smiled wanly at the idea of lending money

GUARDING HIS GOAL

to Arnold. Then the smile faded and he said: "Gee, I needed that eight dollars, Arn. It — it's tough, isn't it?"

"It certainly is, Toby. I'm as sorry as anything. Hang it, if you hadn't been crazy enough to hand out money to a beggar it wouldn't have happened. After this —"

"I know, but there won't be any after this. Look here, Arn, I wish you'd let me have a dime and then run along home. I want to look around a bit and there's no use dragging you around too. Will you?"

"Look around? You mean you want to look for the chap who swiped your purse? That's crazy, Toby, honestly. You haven't got one chance in a hundred, one chance in ten thousand, of ever seeing him again."

"Maybe not, but — but I'd sort of like to try, Arn. You slip me a dime and —"

"Slip you nothing! If you must make a silly ass of yourself I'll stick around with you. Where do you want to go first?"

"Where's the nearest big store like this?"

"I don't know, but we can go and look for it. Do you think he'll be there?"

THE BROWN OVERCOAT

"He might be. You see, if he did so well here he might think he ought to stick to department stores, and he'd probably take the next one. Wouldn't you argue about like that, Arn?"

"Maybe I would, if I were a pickpocket," chuckled Arnold. "All right, old man. Come on. Only I warn you right now that you're only starting on a wild goose chase, so don't be disappointed, Toby."

"I shan't be," answered Toby soberly. On the sidewalk he left Arnold and addressed the carriage-man on the curb. "He says," he announced when he rejoined his chum, "that there's another big store just a little way along here. It's the nearest, so I guess we'd better go there first."

"First? You don't mean that you intend to make the round of all the department stores, do you?"

"I guess there wouldn't be time for that," answered Toby, shaking his head. "You see, my train leaves at three-forty. Besides, I guess that fellow with the red mustache would get tired, or maybe he'd make so much money by dinner time he'd just naturally quit. If he got eight dollars

GUARDING HIS GOAL

from every one he tackled he'd be mighty well off by noon, wouldn't he?"

"Toby, you're an awful idiot," laughed Arnold affectionately as he took him by the arm and steered him along the street. "I'll let you play detective till a quarter to one. Then you've got to give up and come home to luncheon."

"All right. I dare say we can do half a dozen stores by that time. Listen, Arn, I'll tell you what the man looked like so you can be on the watch too, eh? He was short and sort of slim, and he wore a brown overcoat with a velvet collar, and he had a reddish mustache cut close and sort of bristly, and he wore a slouch hat."

"A what?"

"A slouch hat; a soft one, you know; felt. It was dark; I think either black or dark gray."

"Well, that's a pretty good description considering you only saw him for a second," applauded Arnold as they entered the store. "We'd better keep out of sight as much as we can, because if he spotted us first he'd suspect something and run. Let's go around here and work back and then come down the next aisle, and so on. Shall we?"

"I—I don't know about that," responded the

THE BROWN OVERCOAT

other. "Seems to me he'd be likely to stay around where the crowd was thickest, and perhaps he'd try to keep near a door in case he had to — to leave hurriedly."

"That's so, Toby. You're a regular Sherlock Holmes! All right. The crowd's about as thick right here as it is anywhere. Have a look. Do you see him?" Arnold was beginning to enjoy the task now and tried to look as much like his conception of a sleuth as he could. Toby, backed against a counter at one side of the big entrance peered and craned for several minutes, but finally announced that he didn't see the quarry. So they began a pilgrimage of the lower floor, pausing wherever the crowd was densest. Near the elevators they found a point of vantage and spent quite ten minutes but without result other than being pushed and elbowed and trod on. From there they went on to the foot of a central stairway and again took up their watch. But no red-mustached, brown-overcoated individual rewarded their sight, although they both more than once thrilled with the prospect of success at sight of a brown garment in the throng. They spent more than half an hour in that store, and Arnold's en-

GUARDING HIS GOAL

thusiasm was waning fast by the time Toby acknowledged defeat and led the way toward the big doorway.

"I guess it's no use," sighed Toby. "He's a goner. And so's my money."

"Well, I told you that in the first place," said Arnold, just a trifle peevishly by reason of having been shoved around and bumped into until he felt, as he told himself, like a wreck. "Want to try any other place? It's nearly twelve and —"

He stopped suddenly, for Toby's hand was gripping his arm painfully. "*There he is!*" whispered Toby. "*Look! Over by the umbrellas!*"

CHAPTER IV

THE CAPTURE

ARNOLD'S gaze sped in the direction indicated, but for an instant the crowd interfered. "Are you sure?" he asked incredulously.

"Yes," whispered Toby. "I saw him! Now look, Arn!"

Well, whether he was the man who had taken Toby's purse or not, at least he tallied surprisingly with Toby's description. He was standing with his back to the counter in front of a fan-shaped display of ladies' umbrellas, looking impatiently and frowningly about him for all the world like a man kept waiting at an appointment. So well did he look the part, in fact, that Arnold was quite certain that Toby must be wrong. But a closer examination of the man convinced him that he was only acting, for the eyes under the pulled-down brim of a black felt hat darted swiftly hither and thither, reminding Arnold too much of a hawk.

GUARDING HIS GOAL

Some twenty feet of aisle space, crowded with shoppers, separated the boys from the man in the brown overcoat, and it was only by raising himself on his tiptoes that Arnold could catch brief glimpses of the latter.

"What are you going to do?" Arnold whispered excitedly.

Toby deliberated. Then he shook his head. "I don't know. If there was a policeman here —"

"They have detectives in these stores, I think," said the other. "Only I don't know how a fellow would know one if he saw him."

"I might keep an eye on him while you found a policeman," suggested Toby, doubtfully.

"Suppose he went off before I got the officer, though?"

"That's the trouble. We might ask a clerk to send for one, or — or find the proprietor —"

But the man in the brown overcoat settled the matter then and there by leaving his place at the counter and mingling with the outgoing throng. More by luck than anything else, Arnold saw and tugged Toby's coat sleeve. "Come on!" he said quickly. "He's going!"

THE CAPTURE

The boys hurried toward the door, or tried to hurry, but their quarry was lost to sight for a moment and when they reached the sidewalk nothing was to be seen of him.

"Which way?" demanded Arnold.

Toby, craning his head, dodging about, pushed and scowled at, was at a loss, and the adventure would have ended there and then had not Arnold's gaze caught a brief flash of light brown between the jostling throng. "I think I see him," he cried. "Come on, Toby!" He pushed his way to the edge of the broad sidewalk, Toby following at his heels, just in time to see the man disappear behind a car at the far side of the street. Without pause they dashed after. That they escaped injury in the seething traffic was only by the veriest good fortune. An automobile almost ran them down half-way across, a trolley car ground its brakes in seeming chagrin as they leaped out of its path, and, after that, they were forced to remain marooned between track and curbing for many moments before a tiny break in the line of vehicles allowed them to squeeze through.

As might have been expected, by the time they found themselves on the sidewalk, very much out

GUARDING HIS GOAL

of breath, the brown overcoat was once more gone from view, and although they gazed up and down the street no glimpse of it rewarded them. Toby's countenance took on an expression of despair that was almost ludicrous and Arnold fretted and fumed.

"If we hadn't been held up out there we'd have caught him," he declared as they stood undecidedly on the edge of the sidewalk. "Now he's gone for good, I guess."

Toby nodded dolorous assent. "I wish I'd just gone up and grabbed hold of him when I had the chance," he said. "Which way was he going, do you think?"

"He wasn't going any way. He was headed straight across the street."

"Why, then—" Toby stopped and ran his gaze over the fronts of the buildings. Almost opposite where they stood was the entrance of a small, third-rate hotel. "I'll bet he went in there," said Toby with conviction. "Maybe he lives there."

Arnold viewed the hostelry and shook his head. "I wouldn't be surprised if that is just where he went, but I don't believe he lives there. Per-

THE CAPTURE

haps if we wait awhile he will come out again. What do you think?"

"I guess it's all we can do," replied Toby. "But we had better get out of sight a little more, for if he came out and saw us he might recognize me and run."

The suggestion was a good one since this side of the thoroughfare was far less crowded and their present position was in fair view of the entrance. So they retired to a near-by doorway from which, by peering around the corner of a plate-glass window, they could watch the hotel entrance. It promised to be tiresome work and there were all sorts of things happening every minute to distract their gaze. But Fortune favored them again and very shortly, for they had been there less than five minutes when Toby uttered a warning hiss and Arnold, whose gaze had wandered for an instant, looked around in time to see the man in the brown overcoat emerge from the hotel. He paused for a moment outside the doorway and speculatively looked up and down the street. Finally he turned eastward and strolled unhurriedly toward them. The boys withdrew further into their doorway, turning their backs

GUARDING HIS GOAL

and becoming on the instant extremely interested in the window display. But the man didn't even glance in their direction and as soon as he had passed the boys slipped out from concealment and followed.

During the next seven or eight minutes, which time the man consumed in reaching the corner, there were many pauses. Their quarry paused frequently to look into windows or survey the passers. Once he stopped and backed up against a building while his gaze speculatively followed two richly-dressed women. But apparently he decided that the women presented small chance for the display of his talents, for he went on again. All the time the boys looked anxiously for a policeman, but a policeman when wanted is an extremely rare thing, and not one appeared in sight all the way along the block. At the corner the traffic signal was set at "Stop" and the man in the brown overcoat paused just back of the curb, one of an impatient throng of a dozen or so persons. Toby and Arnold stopped at a discreet distance. In the center of the intersecting thoroughfares, in command of the traffic signal, was a very tall and very efficient-looking policeman. The boys con-

THE CAPTURE

sulted hurriedly. Then they advanced toward the man in the brown overcoat. The northward and southward streams of hurrying vehicles continued. Toby drew up at the man's right and Arnold on his other side. It was Toby who opened negotiations.

"We were going to point you out to the policeman," he said softly, trying to keep his voice steady, "but we decided to give you a chance first."

The man turned and scowled down with shifty eyes.

"What do you want?" he demanded threateningly.

"My purse and eight dollars and fifty cents," said Toby. "If you try to get away we'll grab you and yell. Keep close, Arn!"

The pickpocket glanced swiftly around at Arnold who was pressing closely against his left shoulder. Then his eyes darted up and down the avenue. At that moment the crossing officer's whistle sounded shrilly and the signal turned. The little throng by the curb surged forward and with a sudden dart the man followed. But Toby had seized one arm and Arnold the other, and not

GUARDING HIS GOAL

fifty feet away was the policeman. The man in the brown overcoat tried, with a snarl, to throw off his captors, but they clung like leeches, and fearing to attract embarrassing attention the man slowed down to a hurried walk. Three abreast, the boys clinging affectionately to him, they crossed the street. Once across the pickpocket stopped of his own choice.

"What is this?" he asked indignantly. "A hold-up?"

"If you want to call it that," answered Toby steadily. "All I want is the purse you stole from my pocket in Eastman's. You hand it over and we'll let you go."

"Aw, I never saw you before," snarled the man. "Get out of here before I hand you something, kids. It won't be no purse, neither!" He tugged in an effort to free himself from their grasps, but they held on hard.

"Want us to shout?" asked Arnold significantly. The man's belligerent gaze wavered. He cast a swift and dubious look toward the officer.

"Well, what is it you want?" he muttered.

"You know," said Toby. "A small yellow

THE CAPTURE

coin-purse with eight dollars in it. Come on, now. You'd better be sensible."

"I ain't got any purse, honest. You can search me, boys!"

"Then you threw it away," responded Toby. "It cost me seventy-five cents, but it was sort of ripping on the seams, so we'll call it fifty. Eight-fifty is what I want from you then."

"Well, I'll be blowed!" said the man with a trace of unwilling admiration. Then he actually chuckled. "Say, kid, you've got your nerve, all right, ain't you? Say, I kinder think maybe you ought to have it. You was decent not to squeal to the cop. All right, kid, you win! But you got to let go my arms if you want me to dig for it."

Toby questioned Arnold with a glance. "Give him his right arm, Toby," said Arnold. "If he starts to go, grab him again. I've got him here."

"Aw, say, can't you believe a feller?" asked the man aggrievedly. "I said I'd loosen up an' I'll do it. Gee, you rich guys is the limit! What's eight dollars to fellers like you, anyway? Why don't you give the rest of us a chance to live?"

He thrust the hand Toby had released between

GUARDING HIS GOAL

the buttons of his overcoat and fumbled an instant, while Toby watched narrowly and Arnold clung like grim death to the other arm.

"Why don't you pick out an honest way to live?" asked Toby.

The man shrugged his shoulders. "Guess I wasn't brung up right," he answered, with a grin. "It ain't so easy to walk the straight an' narrer when you get started all wrong, kid. Here's your money. I threw the purse away. It ain't safe to keep purses around you. Let me have that other hand so's I can count it off, can't you?"

He had brought out a roll of bills quite two inches thick. Toby hesitated, dubious. "Promise not to run?" he asked finally.

"Word of honor, kid!"

"Let him go, Arn."

"Thank you, gentlemen," said the man in the brown overcoat ironically. "Now then, got fifty cents? Here's your nine dollars." He peeled off a five and four ones and Arnold produced a fifty cent piece and the exchange was made. As Toby slipped the recovered wealth into an inner pocket the man said: "That's right, kid. Let me tell you something. Don't never carry money

THE CAPTURE

in an outside pocket. Leastways, not in this town! 'Tain't safe. An' it's an awful temptation to fellers like me. So long, cullies. Good luck!"

"Good-by," said Toby.

The man in the brown overcoat smiled, winked, pulled his hat to a new angle and sauntered off and was soon lost to sight in the throng. Toby drew a deep sigh of relief and satisfaction.

"Jiminy, Arn, I never thought I'd get that back, did you?"

"I never did, Toby. You certainly were lucky. He wasn't such a bad sort after all, was he?"

"N — no." Toby gazed thoughtfully at the busy scene before them. "I dare say there's a lot in what he said, Arn. About getting started right, I mean. I guess lots of folks wouldn't be dishonest if they'd had the right sort of — of bringing up, eh?"

"I guess so. Look here, it's nearly one o'clock! What'll you do about buying your presents?"

"I guess it's too late now." Toby's face fell.

"I tell you what we'll do. We'll find a telephone and send word we won't be home for lunch-

GUARDING HIS GOAL

eon, eh? We'll get a bite to eat somewhere and then you can shop until nearly three. You can do a lot in two hours. What do you say?"

"Would you mind? I'd like awfully to do that."

"Not a bit. It'll be fun. I know a place near here where we can get fine eats. Come on!"

But, although Toby came on, when Arnold turned to speak to him a minute later he wasn't there. Impatiently Arnold turned back. Toby had paused a few yards in the rear.

"For the love of mud, Toby, get a move on, can't you?" exclaimed Arnold. "What's wrong now?"

"Nothing," was the satisfied response. "I only just stopped to see if my money was still there. I won't feel really safe until I've spent it, I guess!"

CHAPTER VI

CHRISTMAS DAYS

ARNOLD had his wish that Christmas, for when Toby awoke on the morning of the twenty-fifth in his little room under the eaves he found that a miracle had occurred while he slept. In fact the miracle was still occurring! Greenhaven was smothered in snow, and big, lazy flakes were still falling from a leaden, misty void. Harbor Street, as it wound northward, showed a single line of footprints, and those were fast being obliterated. The boat yard, across the road, was covered with a white mantle. Beyond, the Cove was dimly discernible, gray-green. The stern of a coal-scow peered through the white mist from the end of Rollinson's Wharf and a little black fishing boat swung at moorings near by. It was a white, silent and, to Toby, very wonderful world that met the sight that Christmas morning. But Toby didn't linger long at his window, for the room was cold. Instead, wondering whether Ar-

GUARDING HIS GOAL

nold had discovered the snow yet, and deciding, with a chuckle, that he hadn't, since it was only seven and Arnold was not a very early riser when at home, he hurried into his clothes and was presently on his way down the creaky staircase.

Appetizing odors came from the kitchen, but the dining-room was deserted save for Mr. Murphy. Mr. Murphy's greeting was a strident "Hello, dearie! Won't you come in and take off your bonnet?" After which he sidled lumber-somely along his perch, put his head coyly on one side and chuckled.

"Hello, you old scoundrel," said Toby. "Merry Christmas to you." He rubbed the parrot's head with a finger and Mr. Murphy closed his beady eyes and enjoyed it. Toby was glad there was no one there, for it gave him an opportunity to place the packages he had brought around the table. Others, he saw, had been ahead of him, for already each plate held its quota of mysterious parcels tied with red ribbon. Then Phebe came in from the kitchen and Mr. Tucker stamped in from outdoors and Christmas greetings mingled, while Mr. Murphy, who loved excitement, bobbed about on his perch and cried "All

CHRISTMAS DAYS

hands stand by!" and "Come to breakfast! Come to breakfast! Come to breakfast!" And in the middle of the hubbub appeared Toby's mother bearing a big platter, and a minute later they were all seated at the table.

That was a very merry meal. One after another the packages were undone and the contents exclaimed upon and passed from hand to hand to be admired and every one quite forgot to eat anything until all the presents had been opened. Mr. Tucker was very much pleased with his shaving set, and Phebe, who was thirteen and fast becoming a very pretty young lady, wound the blue-and-white silk scarf Toby had given her round her throat and refused to be parted from it. Toby's gift to his mother was a pair of gloves which Mrs. Tucker declared very much too fine for her. The fact that they were a full size too small was not divulged. Toby's own presents were simple and practical; a dressing-gown and handkerchiefs from his mother and sister, a five-dollar gold piece from his father, a pair of woolen mittens from Long Tim and a watch-fob of braided leather from Shorty Joe. Tim and Joe worked in Mr. Tucker's boat yard. When, later in the day,

GUARDING HIS GOAL

Billy Plank, the postman, plowed up to the door, there was another gift for Toby. Of course he guessed right away who it was from, and his guess proved right. There was a card on top of the little blue box which read: "Merry Christmas to Toby from Arnold." When the layer of cotton had been removed, as well as much white tissue paper, the gift resolved itself into a pair of gold cuff-links with the letters T. T. intertwined on them. Of course, as Toby said, they were much too expensive for his use, but they pleased him immensely and he carried them around in his pocket all day and viewed them proudly at intervals. By comparison, his gift to Arnold, an inexpensive little leather case for pins and studs, looked rather mean, but he was much too sensible to be worried over it.

After breakfast he set out to visit Long Tim and Shorty Joe and deliver the presents he had brought them, two ties of most remarkable hues which, judged solely as color effects, had been stupendously cheap at thirty-seven cents apiece! Fortunately, as Toby well knew, both Joe and Tim were fond of bright colors, and his gifts were received with open-eyed admiration. It was al-

CHRISTMAS DAYS

most noon when he at last got away from Shorty Joe, who had much to tell him of happenings during his three months' absence from Greenhaven. They weren't very important happenings, but they were of interest to Toby. Dinner was at two o'clock, and Toby's Uncle Benedict and Aunt Sarah, from Good Ground, arrived a few minutes before, Aunt Sarah bringing him a pair of worsted gloves which she had knitted. Toby was sorry that he had neglected to provide a gift for her, but Aunt Sarah didn't appear to notice the omission. Dinner was a very jolly and very hearty affair, and after it was over, Toby, resisting a desire to go to sleep, persuaded Phebe to don her new muffler and go for a walk with him. It was getting well along toward dusk by that time and the snow, which had fallen steadily since before midnight, had almost stopped. They took the road through the town and then turned up the hill behind the little village from which a wonderful view of Spanish Harbor and the bay lay before them. They had lots to talk about and Phebe was full of questions regarding Toby's school adventures. On the way back they met two of Toby's friends, Billy Conners and Gus Whalen, and the quartette went on

GUARDING HIS GOAL

to the little white cottage around the end of the Cove and satisfied surprisingly vigorous hungers with slices of cold turkey and cranberry tarts.

Toby returned to New York Monday afternoon and spent a glorious four days with Arnold. They went twice to theaters, had several sleigh rides far out into the country, patronized the "movies" two afternoons, explored the Park, lunched one day with Arnold's father at a sumptuous club and, in short, were busy every moment and went to bed each night so tired that they fell asleep the instant their heads touched the pillows.

On Friday Arnold went back to Greenhaven with Toby and shared the latter's none too generous bed, since a guest chamber was something the little house didn't boast, until Sunday. A sharp breeze Friday night provided fair skating on the marsh and it was on Saturday that Toby received his first instruction in the duties of a hockey player. They had no hockey sticks and so they used two lengths of wood that Long Tim cut for them in the boat shed and a block of mahogany. Toby found that while he could out-skate his chum in a straight-away race, the latter could out-maneuver him with ease. Arnold could stop and

CHRISTMAS DAYS

turn and dodge with the quickness of a cat! Toby's efforts to emulate him resulted in many laughable and sometimes jarring upsets. Perhaps that lesson didn't increase his knowledge beyond showing him what a lot he had to learn, but it provided a heap of fun. Sunday morning they tramped over to the Head, through a biting easterly gale, and Arnold, who had provided himself with the key of his father's summer house there, rummaged through the dark rooms for an elusive baseman's glove. Eventually it came to light, but not before the two boys were pretty well chilled through. They tried to light a fire in the kitchen range to warm themselves by before setting out on the return journey, but the range absolutely refused to draw and they had finally to flee, choking and coughing from the smoke that billowed through the cracks. Half-way back Arnold suddenly began to laugh and in answer to Toby's concerned inquiries explained that the reason the stove hadn't drawn was because the chimney-tops were carefully covered, a fact which he had forgotten until the moment!

Arnold went home in the afternoon, Toby and Phebe accompanying him as far as the station

GUARDING HIS GOAL

at Riverport. After that the remainder of the Christmas vacation simply melted away, much as the snow did on Monday when the easterly gale swept around to the south and a radiant sun smiled down on the dripping world. It didn't seem to Toby that he had been away from Yardley Hall more than a half-dozen days, but here it was Tuesday and he was on his way back again! But going back wasn't unpleasant. On the contrary, if anything had happened to prevent his going back he would have been a most unhappy youth. There was lots to look forward to, hockey, amongst other things, for Toby had by now decided that it was his bounden duty to go to the aid of the School in its commendable endeavor to turn out a winning seven. As there was a whole hour and a quarter to spend before he was to meet Arnold at the station, he set out, not without trepidation, to purchase one of those invaluable little blue-covered books which tell you how to perform every sort of athletic stunt from swinging Indian clubs to throwing a fifty-six-pound weight. Of course Toby wasn't interested in clubs or weights just now. What he was after was a handbook on hockey, and after some searching up and

CHRISTMAS DAYS

down and across the town, with one eye on the clock, so to speak, he found it. You may be sure that Toby's scant funds lay at the bottom of his most inaccessible pocket. Had he so much as sighted a brown overcoat he would have run! When Arnold found him he was sitting in a seat in the waiting-room, his feet on his old yellow valise and his eyes glued to page 19 of "How to Play Hockey."

They boarded the ten-forty train and were soon gliding through the long tunnel on their way back to school and duties. But they didn't sit in a parlor car this time. Toby would have none of such luxury, and rather than be parted from him Arnold shared his seat in a day coach. There were some twenty or thirty other Yardley fellows on board and the time went swiftly, and almost before they knew it they were crossing the little bridge and the school buildings were smiling down welcomingly from the hill and the trainman was calling "Wissining! Wissining!" at the top of his voice.

Well, it was good to be back again, Toby thought as, spurning carriages and valiantly lugging their bags, they set off along the road to

GUARDING HIS GOAL

school. Oxford Hall, imposing and a bit grim by reason of its gray granite walls, met their sight first as they left the tiny village and started up the hill. At the top of the tall pole in front the flag was snapping in the brisk breeze. Nerle Hall, the home of the Preparatory Class boys, peered around the corner of Oxford, almost frivolous by comparison with its red brick and limestone trimming. A moment later, following the road to the right at the beginning of its wide swing around the base of the Prospect, as the plateau was called, other buildings came into sight: Whitson, like Oxford, of granite; Clarke, a replica of Nerle; and, just showing between the other buildings, Dudley Hall, the exclusive residence of the graduating class. The buildings at Yardley follow the curve of the Prospect, forming a somewhat stunted letter J, with the Kingdon Gymnasium, out of sight from the road, doing duty as the tip of the curve and Dudley set in back like a misplaced dot. From the gymnasium the ground slopes gently back to the river, and there is the playing field and the boat house and landing and, further beyond, a fair nine-hole golf course. Across the river from the field lies a wide expanse

CHRISTMAS DAYS

of salt meadow known as Meeker's Marsh. A little way upstream is Flat Island and a little further downstream is Loon Island. And not far from Loon Island is the footbridge that connects Wissining with Greenburg and the railway bridge across which trains dash or trundle at almost every hour of the day or night. From the bridges the little river runs fairly straight to the Sound, a mile or so away.

But we have got far from the two boys who, bags swinging — and beginning to feel extremely heavy by now — are breasting the last slope of the well-kept roadway. The old gray granite front of Whitson greets them and Arnold, followed by Toby, seeks the portal and climbs the worn stairs to the second floor. There, while Arnold unpacks his bag, Toby lodges himself on the window-seat and, hugging his knees, talks and gazes off over the tops of the trees to the sparkling waters of the Sound and feels for the moment very glad to be back there and very determined to study hard all through this new term. And presently Homer Wilkins bangs the door open and comes in dragging a big kit-bag and conversation becomes ejaculatory and somewhat noisy, and questions and an-

GUARDING HIS GOAL

swers tumble over each other. Wilkins, who shares Number 12 with Arnold, is a big, jolly looking chap of seventeen, a third class boy who should be in the second but who never has time enough to do the necessary amount of studying. Another train reaches the station and another influx of returning students comes up the hill, and Arnold and Toby and Homer squeeze their bodies half out the window and hail them. And soon after Toby takes up his bag again and climbs the last flight and finds himself once more in his little room under the slates, with the frayed armchair and the wardrobe whose doors won't stay shut unless wedged and the old worn-out rug and — yes, a distinct odor of benzine!

CHAPTER VI

FRIENDS FALL OUT

THAT afternoon at three o'clock Toby accompanied Arnold to the gymnasium where the hockey candidates were assembled in the baseball cage. The arrival of cold weather had added to the enthusiasm and many new recruits were on hand. Arnold haled Toby to Captain Crowell, saluted gravely and announced: "Sir, I have the honor to announce that in pursuance of your orders I have taken into custody and hereby deliver to you the body of one T. Tucker. Please sign the receipt!"

"Hello, Arn, you crazy chump," responded Crowell. "Much obliged, just the same. Glad to have seen you, Tucker. Hope you'll like us and our merry pastime. Just wait around a few minutes and we'll get things started. Say, Arn, you're getting a good many fellows out, it seems. There's Jim Rose. I want to see him a minute."

Crowell hurried away and Toby gazed about

GUARDING HIS GOAL

him. Many of those present he knew by sight, but only a very few were speaking acquaintances. Among the latter were Grover Beech, Frank Lamson, Jim Rose and Ted Halliday. There were others who had sought Toby's services in the matter of pressing their clothes but who never seemed to recall him when they met in public. Arnold had wandered away to speak to Frank Lamson and Toby found himself embarrassingly alone until a somewhat stout youth with a pink-and-white countenance ranged alongside and remarked: "Quite a mob, isn't it? Must be fifty, I guess. So many criminal looking countenances, too! Your name's Tucker, isn't it?"

Toby acknowledged it and the pink-faced youth went on cheerfully: "I suppose you're out for the second. So'm I. Trying for goal. What's your line?"

"Line? Oh, goal, too, I think. Crowell seemed to think I'd better try that."

"Hah! Me hated rival!" exclaimed the other beamingly. "'Tucker versus Creel, or The Struggle for Goal!' Sounds exciting, doesn't it? Know what Crowell's going to spring on us in a minute?"

FRIENDS FALL OUT

Toby shook his head, smiling. He found Creel amusing.

"Well, he's going to inform us that to-morrow afternoon we're expected to go down and build the rink. Last winter I was horribly ill that day." Sid Creel winked knowingly. "Had a beastly cold. If I was you I'd sneeze a few times and blow my nose. That gives you a chance of coming down with grippe before to-morrow."

"Oh, I guess I shan't mind helping," laughed Toby. "How do we do it?"

"You lug a lot of planks from under the grandstand and nail 'em together and drive posts into the ground, which is always frozen solid, and then you shovel dirt up outside the planks. It's all right if you're strong and healthy, but to one of my weak constitution it's fierce. After you get the dirt shoveled up — Did you ever shovel frozen dirt? No? Well, it's no fun. Last year they had to pick it first. You'd think they'd make the rink before it gets cold, wouldn't you?"

"Why, yes, I should," agreed Toby. "Why don't they?"

Creel shook his head sadly. "No one knows. It's a sort of — sort of impenetrable mystery. I

GUARDING HIS GOAL

guess it just isn't done. Anyway, after you get the dirt piled up outside the planks you hitch a hose to the hydrant and turn the water on and wait for it to freeze."

"Well, that part sounds easy," said Toby.

"It may sound easy, but it isn't," responded the other boy lugubriously. "Because you have to stand around and watch the bank you've made. You see, the dirt's mostly in chunks and of course the water oozes out under the bottom of the planks and you have to yell for help and shovel more dirt on and puddle it down with your feet. And while you're choking up one leak about thirty-eleven others start. Oh, it's a picnic — not!"

"But look here," objected Toby, puzzled. "If you were sick last time how do you know so much about it?"

Creel gazed sadly across the cage and made no answer for a moment. Then he sighed deeply, and: "They came up to the room and pulled me out," he answered sadly. "Unfeeling brutes!"

Toby's laughter was interrupted by Captain Crowell, who called for attention. "There won't be any practice this afternoon, fellows," announced Crowell. "And I don't believe there

FRIENDS FALL OUT

will be any more until we get the rink ready. We're going to do that to-morrow afternoon. Every one be on hand as near three as possible so we can get the work done before dark. It doesn't take long if we all show up. If any of you fellows develop colds between now and then you needn't report again. We don't want fellows on the teams who are as delicate as that."

Toby thought Crowell's gaze dwelt a moment on Sid Creel's innocent countenance. "A lot of you are new to the game and I want to tell you right now, so there won't be any kick coming later, that if you put your names down for hockey you'll have to show up regularly or you'll be dropped. We mean to turn out the best seven this year that has ever played for Yardley, and if we are to do that you'll simply have to make up your minds to come out regularly for practice and work as hard as you know how. That means the second team candidates as well as the first. As soon as we get ice the class teams will be made up, and any fellow that shows good hockey with his class team will have a chance to show what he can do on the school squad. You fellows who haven't put your names down will please do it before you leave.

GUARDING HIS GOAL

Halliday is manager and he will take them. I guess that's about all, fellows. Only if you really want to make the teams, show it by doing your best. Listen to what is told you and do your best right from the start. We play our first outside game in a little more than a week, so, you see, there isn't much time to get together. I hope you'll all pull hard for a victory over Broadwood this year. We owe her two lickings and we might as well start out this winter and give her the first one. Don't forget to-morrow afternoon at three sharp, fellows."

Toby gave his name to Ted Halliday and found Arnold waiting for him at the door of the cage in conversation with Frank Lamson. Frank hailed Toby jovially. "Going to be a hockey star, Toby?" he asked. "Well, we need a few earnest youths like you. Have a good time on your vacation? You and Arn must have been mighty busy, I guess. I called up twice on the 'phone and each time they told me that you were out doing the town. How's Greenhaven? Say, that must be a dreary hole in winter, isn't it? Is your sister well?"

"Fine, thanks. Going back, Arn?"

FRIENDS FALL OUT

"N — no, I guess I'll loaf around here awhile. See you at supper, Toby."

Arnold and Frank parted from him on the steps and Toby made his way across the yard, past the sun-dial at the meeting of the paths in front of Dudley and, finally, through the colonnade that joined Oxford and Whitson and so around to the entrance of his dormitory. As he went he puzzled again over the friendship that existed between Arnold and Frank. Personally, he thought Frank Lamson the most unlikeable fellow he had ever met. Perhaps, though, he reflected, Frank possessed some qualities apparent to Arnold and not to him. The two had been friends, though never exactly chums, for several years, while Toby and Arnold had known each other only since the preceeding June. Probably when you had known a fellow three or four years you got to like him in spite of his — his faults. Toby almost said "meannesses," but charitably substituted the other word. Of course, there was no reason why Arn shouldn't go with Frank if he wished to, only — well, for a fortnight or so preceding Christmas recess Arn had spent a good deal more time with Frank than he had with

GUARDING HIS GOAL

Toby, and the latter wondered, as he climbed the twilight stairways to his room, whether Arn was beginning to get tired of him. He was very fond of Arnold and the contingency made him feel rather sad and lonely.

He shed his sweater and cap and seated himself at the deal table, which just now was a study desk and not an ironing-board, and drew a book toward him. But his thoughts refused to interest themselves in Cæsar and he was soon staring out the window and drumming a slow tattoo on his teeth with the rubber tip of his pencil. Perhaps it was only imagination, but, looking back on the last two weeks of vacation, it seemed to him now that Arnold had been less chummy, that something of the wonderful friendship of the summer had been lacking. Of course, Arnold had been perfectly splendid to him, had given him an awfully good time in New York and had probably given up other good times in order to spend that week-end with him at Greenhaven. And there were the gold cuff-links, too. Toby arose and got them from a hidden corner of the top drawer in the bureau and took them back to the window and looked at them admiringly and even curiously, as

FRIENDS FALL OUT

though striving to draw reassurance from them. In the end he laid them on the table and sank back into his chair. They were handsome and costly, but they meant little, after all. Arnold had heaps of money to spend; as much, perhaps, as any fellow in school. Doubtless he would have given him something equally as fine had their friendship been far less close. Why, for all he knew, Arn might have given just such a Christmas present to Frank Lamson! A wave of something very much like jealousy went over him and he scowled at the cuff-links quite ferociously and pushed them distastefully aside. Just that afternoon he had noticed a new pin in Frank's tie, a moonstone, he thought it was, held in a gold claw. It was just the sort of a thing that Arnold would select. In fact, now that he thought of it, Arnold had a pin very much like it! There was no doubt in the world that that moonstone scarf-pin had been Arnold's Christmas present to Frank, and Toby suddenly felt very, very miserable.

The daylight faded and the words on the pages of the open book were no longer legible, although that was a matter of indifference to Toby since he wasn't looking at them. What Toby was doing

GUARDING HIS GOAL

was something far less commendable and useful than studying his Latin. He was imagining all sorts of uncharitable things about Arnold and trying to recall all the faults that Frank Lamson had ever exhibited and making himself extremely miserable. And finally he arose with a shrug of his broad shoulders and lighted the gas and pulled down the shade. After that he scooped the cuff-links up contemptuously and tossed them back into the bureau drawer.

"Let him," he muttered. "Who cares, anyway? He's not the only fellow in school! I guess I can find some one else to chum with if I make up my mind to do it." He closed the bureau drawer with a bang. "He won't ever see me wearing those things. Maybe he bought them for Frank and Frank didn't like them, or something! He can have 'em if he wants 'em. I'm sure I don't!"

After that, since there were no clothes to be cleaned or pressed this afternoon, he resolutely tried to study, and really did manage to imbibe a certain amount of knowledge by the time the supper hour came. He and Arnold had managed to secure seats at the same table in commons (Yard-

FRIENDS FALL OUT

ley Hall, founded by an English schoolmaster, still retained a few English terms); but they had not been able to get seats together, and save on infrequent occasions when some boy's absence made a rearrangement possible they were divided by the width of the table. Supper was usually a jolly and enjoyable meal for Toby, as it was for most others, but to-night he was plainly out of sorts, and when Arnold came in a trifle late and sank into his chair looking flushed and happy, he became more morose than ever. Arnold's greeting was answered coldly, but Arnold failed to notice the fact and went to work with a good will on the cold meat and baked potatoes which formed the principal course. There was a good deal of talk and laughter that evening amongst the ten occupants of Table 14, and consequently Toby's silence and gloom went unnoticed by any one until supper was almost over. Then Arnold, appealing to Toby for confirmation of a story he had been narrating, was met with such a chilling response that he paused open-mouthed and stared across at his friend.

"Well, what's wrong with you, T. Tucker?" he asked wonderingly.

GUARDING HIS GOAL

"Nothing," replied Toby, very haughtily.

Several other fellows turned to observe him and the younger of the two Curran brothers laughed and said: "Oh, Tucker's peeved because trade's fallen off. Every fellow had his trousers pressed at home, I guess."

Jack Curran frowned at his brother. "Cut that out, Will," he growled. "Try to act like a gentleman even if it hurts you. I say, Glad, I found that book I told you about. If you want it, come around, will you?"

Gladwin replied and conversation became general again. But now and then Arnold cast a puzzled glance across at Toby's lowered head and wondered what had happened to the usually even-tempered chum. By that time Toby was angry with himself for having shown his feelings. He wouldn't have had the other fellows at the table guess the reason for his glumness for anything in the world. Nor did he want Arnold to guess it. He had meant to treat the latter with chill indifference; he hadn't intended to act like a sulky kid. When he left the table Arnold followed him to join him on the way out as was usual, but to-night Toby skirted another table, reached the corri-

FRIENDS FALL OUT

dor in advance of Arnold and, without a glance, pushed through the swinging door to the stairway and mounted swiftly to his room. Once there he paused on the threshold and listened. If he had thought to hear Arnold's footsteps in pursuit he was mistaken, for Arnold, viewing his friend's singular behavior, had merely shrugged his shoulders a bit irritably and let him go.

In his room again, Toby turned up the light, which had been reduced to a mere pin-point of flame, dragged the chair to the table again and, settling his head in his hands, determinedly attacked his Latin. But for a long while, although he kept his eyes on the page, his ears were strained for the sound of Arnold's footsteps. Other footsteps echoed down the corridor and several doors opened and shut. Roy Stillwell, across the corridor, was singing a football song, keeping time with his heels on the floor:

“Old Yardley can’t be beat, my boy,
She’s bound to win the game!
So give a cheer for Yardley, and
Hats off to Yardley’s fame!”

Toby, listening whether he wanted to or not, wished Stillwell would be quiet. How could a

GUARDING HIS GOAL

fellow study with such an uproar going on? Presently Stillwell was quiet, and then Toby sort of wished he would sing again. The silence was horribly lonesome. He raised his eyes from the book at last and viewed disconsolately the shabby little room. He wished himself back at home and, for the time at least, honestly regretted ever having come to Yardley. It had been, he assured himself, a silly thing to do. Most of the fellows weren't his sort. Nearly all that he knew — and he knew few enough — were boys with well-to-do parents, boys who had about everything they wanted, who lived in comfortable rooms with pictures on the walls and rugs on the floors and easy-chairs to loll in and all sorts of nice things. Secretly, of course, if not openly — and he had to acknowledge grudgingly that they didn't do it openly — they looked down on him for being poor and ill-dressed and having to press clothes to make enough money to assure his return another year. They weren't his kind at all. It would have been far better had he kept on at the high school in Johnstown, as he would have done if Arnold hadn't beguiled him with glowing accounts of Yardley. And there was the matter of

FRIENDS FALL OUT

the scholarship, too. Toby had rather hoped to secure one of the six Fourth Year scholarships, if not a Ripley, which credited one with sixty dollars against the tuition fee, then a Haynes, which carried fifty dollars with it. Arnold had been quite sure that Toby could do it and Toby had thought so himself just at first, but there had been trouble with mathematics in October and during the time that he had striven to make good as a football player he had slumped a little in Latin as well. The announcement would be made the last of the week, but Toby no longer dared hope to hear his name coupled with one of the prizes.

Suddenly he turned his gaze toward the door and listened intently. Footsteps on the stairs! They sounded like Arnold's! Then they came along the corridor, nearer and nearer. Were they Arnold's? One instant Toby thought they were and the next doubted it. They weren't quite like, but if they stopped at his door —

They did stop! And a knock sounded! Toby held his breath. He wanted to run across the room and throw the door open, but something held him motionless. Another knock, louder this time, and then the door-knob was tried.

GUARDING HIS GOAL

"Let him knock," said Toby to himself stubbornly. But he didn't really mean it. If Arnold called, he decided, he would let him in. He waited tensely. There was a moment's silence outside. Arnold must know that he was in, Toby assured himself, for he could see the light through the transom and if he really cared about seeing him he would try again. If he didn't —

"Tucker!" called a voice from beyond the locked door. "Tucker, are you in there?"

Toby's heart sank. It wasn't Arnold after all! Outside the door stood a small and apologetic preparatory class youth with a suit draped across one arm. "S-sorry to disturb you, Tucker," he stammered, "but I wanted to know if you thought you could do anything with these. Th-they're in an awful mess. I b-brushed up against some paint in the village to-day."

"I'll fix them," answered Toby listlessly. "What's the name? Lingard? All right. I'll have them for you to-morrow evening."

"Thanks," exclaimed the youngster gratefully. "I — I hope you won't find them too — too m-messy."

"I guess not. Good-night."

FRIENDS FALL OUT

Toby closed the door again, tossed the clothes over the back of the dilapidated arm-chair and returned gloomily to his lessons. He was a fool, he muttered, to think Arn cared enough to seek him out. Not that it mattered, however. Not a bit! Arn could plaguey well suit himself. *He didn't care!*

CHAPTER VII

FIRST PRACTICE

IT'S remarkable how different things look in the morning! A chap may go to bed the night before in the seventh subway of despair and wake up in the morning feeling quite cheerful and contented. And this is especially true if the sun happens to be shining and a little frosty, nippy breeze is blowing in at the window and the faint odor of coffee and other delectable things floats in with the breeze. As Toby's room was over the kitchen, which occupied the basement of Whitsom, he was quite frequently treated to a presentment of what was to happen in commons. This morning, sitting on the edge of his bed, and shivering a little as the playful zephyrs caressed his legs, he sniffed knowingly and decided that there was an unmistakably choppy bouquet to the fragrance arising from the kitchen windows. And he was pleased, because he was especially fond of lamb chops. Also, he was particularly hungry to-

FIRST PRACTICE

day, having eaten scantily of supper because —

That because brought back to memory his overnight's grievance. But this morning it seemed absurdly trifling. He had, he decided, made a silly ass of himself, and he wondered what on earth had got into him! He would find Arnold the very first thing and show him that he was sorry. Of course Arnold liked Frank Lamson. Why shouldn't he, since they had known each other several years? Besides, Frank, after all, wasn't such a bad chap probably — if you knew him well! Meanwhile there was a bath to be taken, and one had to do a lot of hustling to get a bath in before breakfast for the reason that the bathing facilities in Whitson were archaic and there were some twelve boys for each tub. This knowledge spurred Toby to action and he jumped up and closed the window with a bang, seized the gorgeous new crimson dressing-gown that his mother had given him for Christmas and, struggling hurriedly into it, dashed down the hall. For once promptness earned its reward. Only Stillwell and Framer were ahead of him and Toby was back in his room in five minutes, glowing and happy and hungry.

GUARDING HIS GOAL

When, on his way downstairs, he knocked at the door of Number 12 and was invited to enter, he found only Homer Wilkins within. Homer was still very incompletely attired and very sleepy looking, and he informed Toby with a prodigious yawn, that Arn had gone on down. "He's a regular Little Brighteyes," he complained. "No worm would have half a chance with Arn. What's the weather like, Toby?"

"Great! You'd better hustle if you want any breakfast."

"I don't expect any," replied Homer sadly. "I haven't had a square meal in the morning since I've been here. Everything's sold out when I get down. They ought to have a lunch-wagon for fellows —"

But Toby didn't hear the rest. Arnold was busily adorning his plate of oatmeal with much cream and sugar when Toby reached the table. Only four others were on hand so far.

"Morning," greeted Toby as he sat down and pulled his napkin out of its numbered ring.

"Hello, Tucker!" "Morning, Toby!" "Greetings!" "Shove that sugar-bowl along this way, will you?"

FIRST PRACTICE

Arnold, however, only looked up briefly and nodded. Toby's face fell. When one is ready to apologize and make up it is most disheartening to find that the other party isn't ready! Evidently Arnold was nursing resentment, and Toby knew that as a nurse for that sort of thing Arn was hard to beat. But he pretended that he observed nothing different in his friend's attitude and was quite chatty — for Toby. Will Curran, who had been severely lectured by his older brother for snobishness, showed a desire to make amends and was unusually attentive to Toby. By the time the table had filled up, which was only when the leisurely Homer Wilkins had fallen wearily into the chair at Arnold's left, Arnold had forgotten to look hurt and proud and was holding an animated discussion with Gladwin on the subject of hockey skates. Glad, as he was generally called, was firm for the half-hockey style and Arnold pinned his faith on the full.

"A straight blade is all right for racing," declared Gladwin, "but it's too slow for hockey."

"Too slow!" exclaimed Arnold. "How do you mean, too slow? You get more surface to the ice and —"

GUARDING HIS GOAL

"That's all right when you're skating, but when you want to turn quickly —"

"Oh, shucks! Look here, Glad, you take a skate that's got a round toe and how are you going to start quickly? You can't dig your toes in, can you?"

"No, but you don't have to. A fellow can start just as quick on the edge. A long, flat blade is —"

"Oh, poppycock! You never saw a racer start on the edge, I'll bet! Look at the Canadians. You don't deny that they know more hockey than we do, do you?"

"They did," responded Glad cautiously, "but we're catching up with 'em nowadays. Anyway —"

"Well, they know hockey, son, and they use a full-hockey skate every time! If that doesn't prove it —"

"I don't think the Canadians play any better game than we do these days," interrupted Glad. "And that doesn't prove anything, anyway. Canadians are more or less English, and you know mighty well that an Englishman uses the same skate to-day that his great-grandfather used, and

FIRST PRACTICE

couldn't be made to change. It — it's all a matter of custom with them!"

"Don't be a silly ass, please," begged Arnold. "Any fellow who has seen a Canadian hockey team knows that they use a full-hockey skate, and a full-hockey skate wasn't made until a few years ago, and so their grandfathers couldn't have used them! Why, you might just as well say that the best hockey skate is an old-fashioned 'rocker'!"

"There's a lot of difference," began Gladwin, but the audience told him to shut up and eat his breakfast, and Arnold was restored to his normal equanimity by the knowledge that he had won the debate. Consequently, when, a few minutes later, Toby met him in the corridor, Arnold had quite forgotten his grievance.

"Did you hear that line of piffle Glad pulled?" he demanded. "I'd like to see him make his quick starts on a pair of half-hockeys! I'll bet I could beat him every time!"

"Of course you could," agreed Toby. "Say, Arn, I — I'm sorry I was such a beast last night, you know."

"What? Oh! Say, what was the matter with you, you silly chump, anyway?"

GUARDING HIS GOAL

"Nothing, really. I was sort of — sort of cranky, I guess."

"Must have been," agreed Arnold cheerfully.
"Had the hump, I suppose. How is it by you to-day?"

"Oh, I'm feeling great to-day. Let's get out and tramp a little before first hour. Shall we?"

"All right. Wait till I get a cap. Guess we'll need sweaters, too."

"I'll have to run up and get mine and I'll fetch yours on the way down." Toby paused with the door half open. "Say, Arn, it's — it's all right, isn't it? About last night, I mean."

"Of course it is, you chump! Get a move on. We've only got about twenty minutes."

At three o'clock in the afternoon of that fifth day of January the stretch of low ground near the river and south of the running track became the scene of remarkable activity. Fully half the school turned out, although not all, I regret to say, with the intention of being helpful. Perhaps fifty per cent. of the gathering was there to watch the other fifty per cent. work and to get as much amusement as possible out of the spectacle. Mr. Bendix, the Physical Director, better known as

FIRST PRACTICE

"Muscles," was in charge of proceedings, assisted by Andy Ryan, the trainer. Corner pegs had already been set when the boys arrived and the task of digging holes for the uprights to hold the boards in place was under way. Captain Crowell, acting as lieutenant, doled out shovels and picks and soon the necessary excavations were completed. Fortunately, only the crust of the earth was frozen and once under that digging was easy. The joists were next lugged from their place of storage under the grand-stand and dropped into the holes and with one boy holding and two or three others shoveling, and Andy Ryan running around with a carpenter's level to see that the joists were set straight, that part of the work went swiftly and would have gone more swiftly if the onlookers, being in a particularly happy frame of mind, had not stood around and cheered every move enthusiastically.

Then a stream of fellows made for the back of the grand-stand again and returned bearing the planks, which, being in sections ready to attach to the uprights, required less labor than the pessimistic Creel had led Toby to anticipate. Each section was numbered and fell readily into place,

GUARDING HIS GOAL

after which a few long spikes completed the operation. Toby, armed with a hammer and a bag of spikes, was one of the carpenters. Every time he missed the head of the spike a shout of derision arose from the attentive audience, and, in consequence, Toby was very likely to promptly miss again! But there were plenty of others to aid and before long the three-foot-high barrier was in place, enclosing a parallelogram of faded and trampled turf one hundred and thirty-two feet long by sixty feet wide. Before the last spike had been driven home the boys were busy with picks and shovels and a foot-high bank of earth was being thrown up against the bottom of boards on the outside. By the time the last shovelful had been tossed in place twilight was on them and the spectators had departed. The thermometer showed the mercury at twenty-eight degrees, but falling, and it was decided to put in enough water to only saturate the ground. Two lines of hose were coupled to the nearer hydrants and the enclosure was thoroughly wet down. That ended the labor for the time and some forty-odd boys, abandoning shovels and picks, viewed the result of their labor with proud satisfaction and tramped

FIRST PRACTICE

somewhat wearily back to the dormitories. To Toby, at least, who had worked hard and unceasingly from first to last, the lighted windows up the hill looked very good.

The thermometer was down to twenty in the morning and again the water was turned into the hydrants, the hose coupled and the frozen ground sprayed. This operation was repeated twice more during the day and when, in the late afternoon, Toby and Arnold walked down to the rink they found an inch of ice already formed. But it was not until the following afternoon that the rink was ready for use. The mercury was down to fourteen above zero at three o'clock and the final spraying at noon had supplied a surface as smooth and hard as glass. By a quarter past three four squads were at work, rushing and passing and, it must be acknowledged, sprawling over the ice. Later two teams were picked by Captain Crowell and the other fellows pulled their sweaters on again and lined the barrier and looked on. Most of the school was on hand, as well, and although there was no line-up that afternoon, they found plenty to divert them.

Toby, of course, spent most of the practice time

GUARDING HIS GOAL

outside the barrier, but he profited not a little by watching the more fortunate fellows. Going back, he confided to Arnold that he was sure he would never be able to get around on skates the way those chaps did. Arnold, whose right to a place on the first team was generally recognized, had been hard at it and was feeling very perked up and cheerful and derided Toby's doubts.

"You wait till you've had a few days of it," he said. "You'll get the hang of it all right. There's only one secret, Toby, and that is skate low. It helps you to keep your balance and makes it harder for the other fellow to body-check you. If you're standing straight on your skates the least shove will throw you over, but if you're skating low you can take a good hard check and keep your feet on the ice."

"I see that," said Toby. "But you fellows dodge and jump around and turn so quickly! Why, I'd break my silly neck if I tried it!"

"You'll learn. Anyway, if you go in for goal, you won't need to know so much about skating."

"How much does a pair of skates like yours cost?" asked Toby after a moment's silence.

"I paid five, but you can get a good pair for



FIRST PRACTICE

three and a half. Don't buy any till you find out whether you're going to play goal or not, though. If you play goal you'll be better off with a pair of heavy skates with short blades. You can move a heap quicker in them."

"And how much would they be?"

"Oh, three and a half, I guess. What's the matter with wearing the ones you have?"

"Could I? They're sort of old-fashioned. I only paid a dollar and a half for them, and I've had them about three years.

"Let's see them," said Arnold. They paused in the light from a lower window in Merle and Arnold looked them over. Finally he grunted and passed them back. "I guess they wouldn't do, Toby. They'd break in two if some one gave them a good swipe with a stick or skated into them. What you want to do is to get a pair of skating shoes and screw your skates right onto them. Those full clamp skates are always tearing your heel off."

"How much would shoes cost?" asked Toby.

"Five dollars. More if you want to pay it. But they'll stand by you for two or three years."

"Yes, but Crowell said we'd all have to have

GUARDING HIS GOAL

hockey gloves, and they're frightfully expensive. And I might have to buy a pair of pads if I got to playing goal. I guess hockey's a pretty expensive game, Arn."

"Pshaw, pads don't cost much; only about four dollars, I think. Fifteen dollars will buy everything you'll need."

"Gee, that's cheap, isn't it?" muttered Toby disconsolately. "I guess I'll wait and see if there's any show of making a team before I buy much."

Arnold laughed as they crossed the colonnade and turned toward the entrance to Whitson. "You were always a cautious chap, Toby!"

"I have to be," replied the other simply.

"I suppose you do. Look here!" Arnold stopped in the act of pushing open the door. "I've got a pretty good pair of skates upstairs. They've got button heels, but I guess they'd be all right for you. If you want them you're welcome. Come on up and I'll dig them out."

They proved all right as to size, but, unfortunately, the heel-plates had been lost. Homer Wilkins, who came in while they were bewailing this fact, suggested that they could get new plates by

FIRST PRACTICE

sending to the maker, and they cheered up again. Toby bore the skates away with him to his room and, arrived there, studied that note-book again. Quite a few fellows had paid their accounts by now and so many of the entries had been scored out, but there was still nearly six dollars owing him. Most of the accounts were small, ranging from fifteen cents to thirty, but a few were larger and Frank Lamson's was the biggest. Frank had promised to pay after vacation, but he hadn't and Toby considered the advisability of reminding him of his promise. But Toby decided finally that he would rather lose the money than dun Frank for it any more. What he would do, though, was to spend an hour after supper trying to collect some of the other amounts due him. Having reached that decision, he started his gas stove, heated his iron and pressed two pairs of trousers and a coat and waistcoat before supper.

Afterwards, he made the rounds of the dormitories before study hour and returned richer by two dollars and eighty cents. That amount, together with four dollars and twenty-two cents which he had by him, he deposited in a little cardboard box and hid under an extra pair of pajamas

GUARDING HIS GOAL

in a bureau drawer, after printing on the lid in ink: "Hockey Fund."

Seven dollars would, he believed, buy a pair of pads and a pair of gloves, and now that Arnold had donated a perfectly corking pair of skates, he wouldn't have to purchase shoes. He could put the heel-plates, when he got them, on the shoes he was wearing and use them for all purposes. He had a feeling that in expending seven dollars for hockey paraphernalia he was being downright extravagant, but he had earned the money and, he told himself defiantly, he had a right to be reckless with it for once. He didn't entirely silence an accusing conscience, but he reduced it to whispers!

Toby had already become an enthusiastic hockey fan without as yet having taken part in a game! His efforts to make good as a football player had not been very successful, and he made up his mind that this time he would conquer. He had an ecstatic vision of one Toby Tucker, a blue-and-white stockinette cap on his head, wearing a white sweater with the crossed hockey sticks and the mystic letters Y. H. T. on it, his legs encased in white leather pads such as Henry, the first team goal tend, had worn that afternoon, armed with

FIRST PRACTICE

a wide-bladed stick, crouching in front of the net while the cheers of Yardley and Broadwood thundered across the rink. The vision stopped there because, for the life of him, he couldn't imagine what the heroic Toby Tucker would do if some brutal member of the enemy team tried to put the puck past him! But it was a fine and heart-warming picture, and Toby wanted terribly to see it realized, and it didn't seem to him at such moments that it would be right to let a small matter of seven dollars interfere with that realization. Besides, there was still the barest, tiniest chance of that scholarship! When Toby was feeling cheerful he recognized that chance. At other times he told himself that it didn't exist. Tonight, being optimistic, he allowed that perhaps, after all, he might win one of the smaller ones. If he did he would never regret the sinful waste of that seven dollars. Fifty dollars would make a lot of difference in his financial condition. However, he wouldn't, he reflected, get his hopes too high. It was much better not to expect anything. Then if he did win a Haynes Scholarship —

Gee, he was getting all excited about it! That wouldn't do, because it was very, very likely that

GUARDING HIS GOAL

he wouldn't succeed. He pulled his books to him and settled himself, with a sigh, for an hour of study. Anyway, he thought, as he opened his algebra, he would know to-morrow, for to-morrow was the eighth and it was on the eighth, according to the school catalogue, that the awards were announced. Of course, since there were only six scholarships for the fourth class and about one hundred students — Toby sighed again, shook his head and plunged into algebra.

CHAPTER VIII

THE SCHOLARSHIP AWARDS

AT Yardley you were supposed to get up at seven. Breakfast was at seven-thirty. You were allowed, however, a half-hour's leeway. That is, you could gain admittance to commons as late as one minute to eight, but whether you found anything left to eat was quite another question. At half-past eight came chapel, and while you might with impunity miss breakfast occasionally, being absent from chapel constituted a dereliction resulting in a visit to the Office. Chapel was held in the assembly hall on the third floor of Oxford. There had been a time, when the founder and first Principal, Doctor Hewitt, had been alive, when chapel had occurred at half-past seven, but nowadays one fortified oneself with food before the morning services.

On this Saturday morning Toby, who was so accustomed to early rising that it was a veritable hardship to lie in bed after seven, finished break-

GUARDING HIS GOAL

fast before eight and was out of the hall before Arnold appeared. Usually he waited for the latter and they crossed to Oxford together; and sometimes Homer Wilkins, by Herculean effort, managed to go along. But this morning Arnold had not returned to his room when Toby clattered downstairs again. Nor was he anywhere in sight. So Toby set out for chapel alone. Probably Arnold would be waiting for him in the corridor in Oxford. It wasn't a morning when one would linger around out of doors, for the mercury was hovering about zero and an icy wind was blowing across the Prospect, cracking the flag and bending the top of the tall mast. Toby dug his hands into his pockets and scurried. The bell began to ring as he reached the steps. Inside, a crowd of boys who had lingered till the last moment, surged toward the stairs, and Toby was caught up and borne along. As a consequence, he did not find Arnold, and when he was seated on one of the old knife-scarred benches he was hedged in between two fellows whom he only knew by sight. Doctor Collins, the Principal, stepped to the rostrum, silence descended over the room and the Doctor's pleasant voice began the reading.

THE SCHOLARSHIP AWARDS

“‘Hearken to me, ye that follow after righteousness, ye that seek the Lord: look unto the rock whence ye are hewn, and to the hole of the pit whence ye are digged.’”

Toby, as he listened, glanced furtively around for sight of Arnold. He had wanted particularly to see him this morning and ask him when and where the scholarship announcements would be made. Toby presumed that a list would be posted on the notice board downstairs, but a hurried examination of the board as he had been swept past had revealed nothing that looked as portentous. Probably the list would be posted later. Toby wondered if he would have the courage to read it! Meanwhile there was no sign of Arnold and Toby concluded that he had arrived late and slipped into a seat near the door.

“‘But I will put it into the hand of them that afflict thee; which have said to thy soul, Bow down, that we may go over: and thou hast laid thy body as the ground, and as the street, to them that went over.’”

Dr. Collins ceased and closed the Bible. There was a moment's pause and the subdued shuffling of feet and moving of bodies. Then

GUARDING HIS GOAL

came silence again and the invocation and, at the last, the Lord's Prayer, the boys reciting together. Toby always liked to hear that. It sounded to him like the boom of the sea back home, and thrilled him. When heads were lifted once more, he became conscious of an undercurrent of excitement, of suspense. The hall was unusually still. The boy on his right, a thin, earnest-looking youth with a pair of eye-glasses set on the ridge of a long nose, sat up straighter and more tensely, and Toby thought he breathed faster than was natural. Toby didn't recall the fellow's name, but they had several recitations in common. In front of him two boys were whispering together, but so softly that he could hear no sound. On the platform Doctor Collins was turning the papers in his hands, and, presently, having sorted them to his liking, he began the announcements. Three students were summoned to the Office; notice was given of a lecture on Stevenson next Tuesday evening at eight; a course in Bible History open to First and Second Class students would begin Monday; those desiring to join would give their names to Mr. Thurman; until further notice, the library would be kept open until ten o'clock at

THE SCHOLARSHIP AWARDS

night, in response to a number of requests. Doctor Collins laid these notices on the desk, cleared his throat and began again. Toby heard the boy on his right take a long breath.

"In assigning scholarships," began Dr. Collins, "the Faculty judges the merits of the applicants, as you doubtless know, on three grounds: scholarship, character and pecuniary need. At present the School has at its disposal twenty-six endowed scholarships, and for the current year they have been assigned as follows."

Toby's heart was doing queer things between his stomach and his throat. He wondered if the others were as surprised as he. Then he realized that every one else had known the announcements would be made here and now; that the under-current of excitement of which he had been dimly aware had been due to that knowledge. He plunged his hands into his pockets and doubled his fists tightly. He, too, was breathing hard and fast now. His thoughts were horribly jumbled, and he wondered where Arnold was, wished he was here, was glad he wasn't, told himself he had absolutely no chance for a scholarship, hoped frantically that he had, and all in the small fraction of

GUARDING HIS GOAL

time that lapsed while Doctor Collins settled his glasses more firmly.

"As your names are mentioned, you will kindly stand," continued the Principal. "To members of the First Class: Barton Scholarships of one hundred and twenty-five dollars to William George Phinney, Clark's Mills, Rhode Island; David Fearson Caldwell, New York City; Jasper Haynes, Plainfield, New Jersey; Patrick Dennis Conlon, Bridgeport, Connecticut. Sinclair Scholarships of one hundred dollars to Phillip Studley Meyer, Belfast, Maine; William Patterson Byron, Newark, New Jersey. Elliot Percival Dwight Scholarships of eighty dollars to Howard Dana Jones, Englewood, Illinois; Horace Newcomb, Greenburg, Connecticut. The Yardley Hall Scholarship of sixty dollars to Newton Scott McDonough, Wilmington, Delaware."

As each name was announced, somewhere in the hall an embarrassed youth arose and a salvo of clapping greeted him. Toby clapped as hard as any. It sort of took his mind off the question that was jumping around in his brain. The nine youths remained standing until the applause, long continued and hearty, died down. Then:

THE SCHOLARSHIP AWARDS

" You may be seated," said the Doctor. " To members of the Second Class —" Toby listened, but only half heard. When a boy stood up he clapped hard. When a laugh started and rippled around the hall, he laughed too, a trifle hysterically, but didn't know what at. The Second Class recipients sat down and the Doctor began on the Third Class awards. There were but six of these. Toby only knew one of the fortunate fellows, Mark Flagg, who played point with the first hockey squad. The clapping went on and on. Toby wished one instant that it would cease and the next that it would continue. Then it died away, Doctor Collins nodded and the boys sank back gladly out of sight. Toby clenched his hands again, set his countenance in a vacuous stare and held his breath.

" To members of the Fourth Class :" began the fateful voice. " Ripley Scholarships of sixty dollars to Gordon Pitman Wells, Cincinnati, Ohio —"

At the far side of the assembly hall there was a scraping of feet. The clapping broke forth afresh. Toby didn't join this time, nor did he look around. He was too busy keeping his eyes

GUARDING HIS GOAL

on the back of the head of the boy in front of him, and, besides, it is doubtful if he could have unclenched his hands just then.

“— John Booth Garman, Fitchburg, Massachusetts —”

The boy at Toby's right got slowly to his feet. Toby stole a look at his face. He was rather red and very embarrassed and there was a little crooked smile twisting one side of his mouth. Toby's gaze fell to Garman's hand which hung by his side. The long fingers were doubling back and forth nervously. Toby felt for Garman, wanted to tell him he was glad. Then, the applause lessening, he strained his ears again. Not that the crucial moment was yet, for he had no hopes of a Ripley now, nor much hope of anything. He wished it was all over! Doctor Collins seized the moment's calm:

“ Tobias Tucker, Greenhaven, New York!”

Something inside of Toby turned a complete somersault. Perhaps it was his heart, but it didn't feel like it. His gaze went startledly, incredulously from the exact middle of the head in front of him to Doctor Collins' face. Some one was shoving him from behind and a voice hissed

THE SCHOLARSHIP AWARDS

over his shoulder: "*Stand up, you chump!*" Toby climbed dazedly to his feet. If it was a mistake, he told himself hollowly, he would feel like an awful fool! But there didn't seem to be any mistake. Every one was clapping enthusiastically and he saw, or seemed to see, about a million faces smiling at him. His thoughts, as he held onto the back of the bench in front, were horribly confused while the applause lasted. After that, when the Doctor announced the recipients of the three Haynes Scholarships, and the school's attention was shifted from him, he found himself mentally deducting sixty from one hundred and twenty-five and arriving at the joyful if slightly erroneous result of sixty. Why, his tuition bill for the rest of the year would be only ten dollars! (Afterwards he found that it would be fifteen, but he managed to survive the shock!) So busy was he dwelling on the beatitude of this thought that he didn't see Doctor Collins nod nor observe the fact that the other five fellows had seated themselves again, and only became alive to his hideous conspicuousness when Garman tugged at his coat. He sank back onto the bench blushing, but still happy.

GUARDING HIS GOAL

After that there was a short congratulatory address by the Principal and then they all stood up again and sang a hymn. Or, at least, most of them sang. Toby didn't. But then his heart was singing, and maybe that was enough. When the final note had died away Doctor Collins gave the word of dismissal and a quiet and orderly exodus began which turned, outside the doors, into a stampede. Toby, however, went slowly, the better to enjoy his pleasant thoughts, until some one linked an arm in his and dragged him helter-skelter down the remaining flight.

"Hurray, T. Tucker! Didn't I tell you you'd do it? It's great, and I'm tickled to death, Toby!"

Of course it was Arnold, Arnold laughing and eager to show his delight by risking his neck in a final mad plunge down the crowded staircase. Toby brought up at the bottom breathless and shaken and leaned against the wall. "Where were you?" he gasped. "I looked all around for you."

"I waited for Homer and we were late and just got in by the skin of our teeth. Didn't you see me waving to you when you stood up? Gee, but

THE SCHOLARSHIP AWARDS

I'm glad you got a Ripley, Toby. I was afraid it might be only a Haynes."

"I was afraid it might be only nothing," laughed Toby. "I was so surprised when Doc said my name that I guess I'd be sitting there yet if some fellow hadn't shoved me and told me to stand up! I don't see now how I happened to do it. I made an awful mess of math for a while, and then in November I had trouble with Coby about Latin. I don't see —"

"Oh, never mind what you don't see," interrupted Arnold gayly. "You got it. That's enough, isn't it? Come on over and chin awhile."

"What time is it? I can't. I've got English at nine. But, gee, I won't know a thing, I guess!"

"All right, then, I'll see you at eleven. I'm awfully glad, Toby. You deserved it, too. Every one says that. Lots of fellows were as pleased as anything when Doc announced your name. I guess you got as much clapping as any of them!"

"Did I?" asked Toby in surprise. "Why, I didn't suppose many fellows knew anything about me! I guess — I guess you're just jollying!"

GUARDING HIS GOAL

" Honest, I'm not! Lots of fellows around where I was sitting nearly clapped their old hands off for you, and four or five said afterwards that they were mighty glad you'd copped it. So long! Come up to the room at eleven, eh? "

Toby nodded and turned back toward the entrance to Oxford. It seemed strange, even incredible, that any one should have cared whether he won that scholarship. But it was mighty nice. It made things even better. He hadn't supposed that he had any friends in school beside Arnold and, perhaps, a couple of chaps in his own class who had been more or less chummy at times. Well, he would just have to show them and Doctor Collins and — and every one that he really deserved it. He would study as hard as anything and maybe — well, it was only a chance, but *maybe*, he'd finish in June an Honor Man! Rather a stupendous dream, that, but Toby was feeling stupendous this morning!

CHAPTER IX

T. TUCKER PLAYS GOAL

TOBY set himself earnestly to learn hockey. I'm not going to tell you that after a week of sliding and whanging around with the third or fourth squad he displayed such a marvelous ability that Yardley Hall was amazed and delighted at the advent of a new star, or that Orson Crowell, bowing his head in surrender, offered him the captaincy. Such a thing may happen sometimes, although it is usually in stories, but it didn't happen in Toby's case. No, sir, not by a lot! Toby began by being just about as awkward and useless as any one could be. For the first day or two he evidently believed that a hockey stick was meant to trip over, and when he did use it for other purposes, he wielded it like a baseball bat. However, after he had cut Fanning's forehead open with one of his wild swings, and been sternly reminded for the tenth time that the rules forbade lifting the stick above the shoulder, he handled it

GUARDING HIS GOAL

more discreetly. Loring Casement, who was slated for the second team captaincy, had charge of the third and fourth squads, and Loring made the mistake of sizing up Toby as a possible forward, and for the better part of a week, in fact until the Monday following the game with St. John's School, he was allowed to dash wildly and more or less confusedly about the ice to his own vast enjoyment and the entertainment of the spectators. Toby's method of advancing the puck was to get a good start, stumble over his stick, slide a few yards, scramble to his feet again and hurl himself on the nearest adversary, whether said adversary happened to have possession of the puck at the moment or not. We are told that a rhinoceros, being wounded, will charge at the first object he sees, whether it is a man or a tree or an ant-hill. These were Toby's tactics. The first person who met his eyes was his prey. It took Toby several experiences to connect his thunderbolt charges with the blowing of the referee's whistle and the cessation of play. But eventually, after Casement had almost tearfully reiterated that the rules prohibited the checking of a player not in possession of the puck, Toby saw his error.

T. TUCKER PLAYS GOAL

Possibly he would have developed after awhile into a fair sort of center or wing, although all indications were against that supposition, but he wasn't given the chance. On that Monday before mentioned Captain Crowell advised Casement to try Toby at defense, and so Toby suddenly found himself at point.

Playing point is vastly different from scurrying up and down as a forward, as Toby discovered. When you played point you did a lot of waiting and watching, and when you did have anything to do you had a whole lot! It was rather a breathless moment for him when, for the first time, he set himself in the path of the invaders. It almost made him dizzy trying to keep his eyes on the puck, which was slipping from one onrushing forward to another, and when he did check he got the wrong man and the puck was in the net by the time he had scrambled to his feet again. The goal tend viewed Toby disgustedly and muttered uncomplimentary things. But Toby showed up better on defense than attack, soon got a glimmering of what was expected of him and, whatever his faults may have been, never exhibited any lack of enthusiasm. The heel-plates had so far failed to ar-

GUARDING HIS GOAL

rive — they did come eventually, but not yet — and so Toby had to wear his old skates. They were forever coming loose and causing him trouble and delaying the game. His team-mates begged him to "scrap 'em, Tucker, and buy some skates."

Toby discovered very early in his experience that hockey required mental as well as physical abilities. Quick thinking and cool thinking were, he decided, prime requisites. Watching Orson Crowell or Arnold or Jim Rose, all seasoned players, zig-zag in and out between eager opponents, feinting, dodging, but keeping the puck all the while, was quite a wonderful sight. He had thought so before he had tried it himself. After he had tried it he was just about ten times as sure of it. Where Toby made his error at first was in mistaking calculating science for headlong recklessness. When Crowell, as an example, skated into a mêlée and brought the puck out, Crowell knew beforehand what he was going to do and how he was going to do it. When Toby tried it he merely flung himself into the maelstrom without having any distinct idea of what was going to happen; except, of course, that he knew he was go-

T. TUCKER PLAYS GOAL

ing to get his shins cracked or dent the ice with some prominent angle of his anatomy. After awhile Toby decided that there was a difference between daring and mere recklessness, and he concluded that he would skate more with his head and less with his feet!

Several things came hard to him. For a long time he could not learn to use both hands on his stick, and the exhortation from Casement: "Both hands, Tucker, both hands!" followed him everywhere. When he did get the hang of it, though, he found that he was far better off, if only for the reason that the stick was always in front of him and never getting mixed up with his skates. But besides that he discovered that it aided him a lot in keeping his balance and when dodging. And it was always ready for use, something that couldn't be said for a trailing stick. Another thing that was difficult for him to master was dribbling instead of hitting the puck. Toby's ball playing had left him with a natural inclination to use anything in the nature of a stick or club with a swing, and merely pushing the little hard-rubber disk along the ice seemed too slow. But after he had lost the puck innumerable times by striking

GUARDING HIS GOAL

it he understood the philosophy of dribbling. If Toby was slow to learn, at least, having learned, he remembered.

The ambition to own his own stick took possession of him before long, and one afternoon he and Arnold and Homer Wilkins walked over to Greensburg and had a regular splurge of spending. To be sure, it was Arnold and Homer who left the most money behind, but Toby spent a whole half-dollar for the best hockey stick he could find and fifteen cents more for hot sodas. Selecting that stick was a long and serious matter. Toby left it largely to Arnold, and Arnold, sensible of the honor done him, was not to be hurried.

"You want a Canadian rock elm stick," he declared gravely. "Rock elm won't fray on the edge the way other sticks will. Take rough ice and your stick will have whiskers all along the bottom of the blade if it isn't made of the right stuff. And you want to choose one that's got a close, straight grain, too. The grain ought to run perfectly straight with the haft and turn with the blade. Here's one — No, it's got a knot in it. See it? A good whack with another stick would break that there as sure as shooting."

T. TUCKER PLAYS GOAL

"How's this one?" asked Toby.

"Too heavy, son. It isn't seasoned, I guess. If you get one that isn't dried and seasoned perfectly it'll warp on you, and —"

"I'd hate to have a hockey stick warp on me," murmured Homer distastefully. "Still, I suppose I could take it off, eh?"

"I guess this is the best of the lot," continued Arnold, too much absorbed to heed levity. "It's got a medium wide blade, with a knife edge; not too sharp, though, either. How do you like it? Feel good?"

Toby hefted it doubtfully. "I think so. Only I thought maybe I'd rather have one with a narrower thingamabob."

"Narrower blade? But that's a forward stick, T. Tucker. You want a stick for defense, don't you? You can use this one at point or goal, either one. Those narrow blades won't stop a puck the way the wide ones will. And it's light, too, and has a peachy grain. I've got some tape you can have, so you needn't buy any."

So the matter was eventually settled, and the salesman, who had long since wearied of standing by, returned and accepted Toby's fifty-cent piece

GUARDING HIS GOAL

and offered to wrap the stick up. But Toby preferred to carry it unwrapped so that he could examine the grain and swing it speculatively and admire it to his heart's content. After that Arnold bought a bottle of glue, half a dozen pencils, a pair of garters and three bananas, and Homer purchased a red-and-green necktie which attracted his attention away across the street and a book with a splashy cover entitled "Dick Dareall in the Frozen Seas."

"That doesn't sound like sense," objected Arnold when they were outside again. "If he was in the frozen seas he'd be stuck tight, wouldn't he?"

"Maybe he was," said Homer. "Or maybe I'm the one who's stuck."

"That sounds fair," agreed Arnold. "Say, he must have had a fine time playing hockey, eh? I guess those frozen seas would make a dandy rink?"

They induced Homer to unwrap his necktie for their re-examination, and Arnold pretended to be frightened and dashed wildly into the street and was almost run over by an express truck. Toby secretly admired that vivid tie very much and

T. TUCKER PLAYS GOAL

wanted one just like it, but it was more fun pretending that it made him feel squirmey and faint. Homer wasn't in the least disturbed by their criticisms, however.

"It's just envy," he said tranquilly. "You'd both mighty well like to have it. Besides, it has the green of old Broadwood, and you know how I love the dear old school."

As usual, they found a sprinkling of Broadwood boys in the drug store when Toby stood his modest treat. They were really quite nice looking chaps, but Homer insisted that they showed every indication of degeneracy. "Observe the sloping foreheads," he whispered, "and the weak chins. Also the vacant expression of the eyes. Still, these aren't so bad, really. They only let the best looking ones out."

"I know," replied Arnold gravely. "They tell me," he went on, raising his voice, "that they're starting post-graduate courses at Broadwood."

"That so?" inquired Homer, in the encouraging tone of an interlocutor in a minstrel show.

"Yes," drawled Arnold. "They're going to teach reading and writing to the advanced stu-

GUARDING HIS GOAL

dents, I understand. And I believe there is even some talk of a course in elementary arithmetic, but that may be an exaggeration."

"My word! Well, Broadwood's an awful up-and-coming place! I *have* heard that they were going to introduce football —"

"Aw, cut it!" interrupted a disgusted voice from behind Toby. "That's old stuff!"

"Is it?" asked Arnold, innocently regarding the scowling countenance showing around Toby's shoulder. "We just heard of it. Much obliged."

"Fresh snips," growled another Broadwood youth. "I didn't know they let their juniors come to town."

"What's yours, gentlemen?" inquired the attendant behind the counter.

"Three hot sodas, please," began Toby. But Homer interrupted, with a wink.

"We'll take three Broadwood punches, please."

"I don't know those," said the clerk, smiling doubtfully. "Spring it."

"There ain't no such thing," answered Homer. "Give him the regular Yardley drink," advised

T. TUCKER PLAYS GOAL

a hostile voice from further along the counter.
“Just fill a glass with hot air.”

Toby was beginning to wonder when the trouble would start, but at the sound of the last voice Arnold leaned forward with a grin and, “Hello, Tony!” he called. “How’s the boy?”

“Hello, Arn! That you shooting your silly mouth off? Come down here and have something.”

“Can’t, thanks. How’s everything back in the hills?” But Tony was making his way to them and an instant later Toby and Homer were being introduced to “Mr. Spaulding, the world-famous athlete.” Tony Spaulding proved to be a fine-looking fellow of seventeen or eighteen with a remarkable breadth of shoulders and a pair of snapping black eyes. Four other Broadwood boys were haled forward and introduced, and presently, armed with glasses, they crowded around a diminutive table in the rear of the store and hobnobbed very socially. Toby gathered during the course of the ensuing conversation that Tony Spaulding was the identical left tackle who had caused so much trouble to Yardley last November, although Toby would never have recognized him in his pres-

GUARDING HIS GOAL

ent apparel. It also appeared that Mr. Spaulding was a prominent member of the Broadwood hockey squad and that he was looking forward with much glee to meeting Arnold on the ice a month or so later. Another member of the Broadwood contingent was dragged into the lime-light with the remark: "Towle, here, is going to play goal for us this year, Arn. Johnny, you want to watch out for this shark, Deering, when we play 'em. If you see him coming, spread yourself, boy, spread yourself! And maybe you'd better yell for help, too!"

It was almost dark when they tore themselves away from their friends, the enemy, and set out for home, and quite dark by the time they climbed the hill and reached the radiance of the lighted windows, Toby bearing his new hockey stick with tender solicitude lest its immaculate surface be scratched and Homer regretting the fact that he had intended buying some peanut taffy and had forgotten it.

That was the afternoon preceding the game with St. Johns, and it wasn't until the next morning that it became certain that the game could be played. But a sharp fall in temperature during

T. TUCKER PLAYS GOAL

the early hours set the ice again and by three o'clock it was in fairly good shape. That game wasn't very exciting, for St. John's showed a woe-ful lack of practice and Yardley ran away with the event in the first half and only supplied a spice of interest in the last period by throwing an entire team of substitutes in. Toby, with many a better player, watched the contest from the bench outside the barrier, sweatered and coated against the cold of the afternoon but ready at any moment to throw wraps aside and leap, like Mr. Homer's Achilles, full-panoplied into the fray. Still Toby didn't really expect to be called on to save the day, and he wasn't. Flagg and Framer played point and played it quite well enough. Frank Lamson took Henry's place at goal in the second period and it was against Frank that St. John's was able to make its only two tallies. The first team for-wards, Crowell, Crumbie, Rose and Deering, showed some fine team work that afternoon and won frequent applause, but, as Sid Creel said to Toby, most any one could have got past those St. John's fellows. Halliday showed himself a really remarkable cover point, and he and Flagg worked together like two cog-wheels. The final score was

GUARDING HIS GOAL

12 to 2, and it was very generally agreed that Captain Crowell had material for a fine team and that Yardley had made a good start on her way to the championship.

After the contest was over, willing hands swept the ice surface and the third and fourth squads staged a battle which, if not quite so skillful, had it all over the big show for excitement and suspense. As Sim Warren, who had been playing goal for the fourth squad, was not on hand, Stillwell, presiding in the absence of Loring Casement, looked about for some one to take his place. Stillwell had little data to work on and so solved the problem by moving the cover point to point and the point back to the net, and filling the vacant defense position with a substitute forward. Toby's emotion at finding himself in charge of the fourth squad's goal was principally that of alarm. Ever since Crowell's remark to the effect that in his estimation Toby might make a good goal-tend, Toby had secretly longed to play that position, but this was so — well, so sort of sudden! He had watched Henry preside at the net time and time again, watched admiringly and enviously, and theoretically at least knew the duties of the office, but

T. TUCKER PLAYS GOAL

he was possessed by grave doubts of his ability to profit by his observations. However, he had no choice in the matter. Some one helped him strap on a pair of pads, some one else thrust a wide-bladed goal-tender's stick into his hands and thirteen youths awaited his pleasure with ill-concealed impatience. Then Stillwell blew his whistle, dropped the puck and skated aside, and the battle was on.

There was nothing especially momentous about that half-hour's practice of the scrubs. They hustled around and banged away and got very excited and were off-side every two minutes. And now and then they managed to give a fair imitation of team-work. Stillwell, who would have much preferred being up in the gymnasium talking over the afternoon's game, went through with his task conscientiously enough, but he was chary with the whistle and many a foul went unpenalized. Of course, Toby let several shots get past him, especially in the first fifteen-minute half, when he was decidedly nervous every time the play approached his end of the rink. Later, he settled down and made one or two clever stops, one with his wrist. The latter was unintentional and deprived him of

GUARDING HIS GOAL

the use of that member for several minutes. But his team-mates applauded and so Toby didn't mind. And after awhile the wrist stopped hurting some. On the whole, Toby put up a pretty fair game at goal that afternoon, doing better than the opposing goal-keeper by four tallies, a fact which Stillwell noted and later mentioned casually to Crowell.

"Young Tucker played goal down there this afternoon," he remarked. "Warren was off and I didn't know who else to put in. He wasn't half bad, Orson."

"Tucker? Oh, is that so? That reminds me that I meant to have Loring try him out at that very position. Glad you mentioned it. I'll have a look at him. Lamson let two mighty easy ones get by to-day, and we could use another goal-tend if we had him."

Which conversation would have been remarkably cheering to Toby could he have overheard it at the moment. But he didn't. What he did hear just then was Arnold telling him to "Hold still, you chump! I know it hurts, but this is good for it." Whereupon Arnold rubbed the injured wrist harder and Toby grinned stoically.

CHAPTER X

WITH THE FIRST TEAM

THE second team was made up the following Thursday with Grover Beech in charge as captain. Toby and Warren were retained as goal-tends and ten other youths, among them Sid Creel, made up the squad. The first team squad was cut that same day to fifteen, and about a dozen unsuccessful aspirants departed to private life, or, in some cases, to seek glory on their class teams. Toby was delighted with his good fortune and turned all his thought and endeavors to the task of making himself first-choice for the position. To that end, he read every scrap of information he could find on the subject of a goal-tend's duties, ransacking the school library and borrowing wherever he heard of a book that promised information. But it was surprising what a lot of perfectly good authors had failed to deal with this absorbing subject. Why, you could drag your finger over card after card in the library

GUARDING HIS GOAL

index without finding a thing worth reading! Scott, Thackeray, Lytton, Dickens, Boswell, Stevenson — not a work of advice as to how to play goal on a hockey team! Still, Toby did manage to discover a fair amount of hockey literature, and he read it all avidly and, could the position of first team goal-tend have been awarded by a competitive examination, either oral or written, Toby would have won hands-down! When he had assimilated all the information he had read he took a blue-book and wrote down what was practically a summary of it. That was Toby's scheme for registering indelibly on his brain anything that he wanted particularly to remember. And it was a very excellent scheme, too. Perhaps Toby's summary may be of interest to you. It will if you play hockey or expect to play it, and especially if your ambition looks toward the position of goal-tend. Anyway, here it is, just as he wrote it.

"The goal-tend's position is probably the most responsible of all. If he fails the opponents score, but if another of his team fails the opponent only wins an advantage which may not result in a score. A goal-tender should be cool-headed, plucky and very quick. Quickness is very impor-

WITH THE FIRST TEAM

tant. He should be quick to see a shot coming, to judge where it is coming and to put himself into position to stop it. A goal-tender need not be much of a skater or stick-handler, if he has those other qualifications.

"The goal-tend must guard a space six feet long by four feet high and so it will not do for him to stay in one position all the time. If the play is in front of the net he should stand in the middle of the net, but if the play is at one side he should stand at that side of the net and steady his knee against the goal-post. The rules forbid kneeling or lying on the ice and so if the puck is near the goal he should assume a crouching posture, thus bringing as much of himself as possible near the ice. The larger a goal-tend is the less space he has to look after, because a shot is more likely to hit a fat fellow than a skinny one. He should wear leg-guards that come well above the knees and the bigger they are the better it is, because by bringing his legs together he can then present a considerable surface in case of a low shot. He should also have his shoulders, thighs and elbows padded, both to protect him from injury and to increase his size.

GUARDING HIS GOAL

"He ought not to use his stick to stop a shot with, unless the puck is coming to him on the ice and slowly. He should try to put his body in front of the puck or catch it with his hand. The hardest shot to stop is one which is about knee-high. The goal-tend should watch the puck every minute. He must never leave his goal unless he is sure that he can reach the puck before any player of the opposing team can reach it and there is no player on his own side to do it. When he has stopped the puck he should sweep it aside and behind his goal if possible, but never shoot it ahead of him because a player of the other team might get it and shoot it before he was in position to stop it. When the puck is behind the goal he should never take his eyes off of it and when it approaches one side of the goal he should stand at that side and be ready in case a player tries to hook it in. If there is a scrimmage in front of the goal he should turn his skates out wide and keep his stick on the ice also. In that way he can cover about twenty-four inches of the goal. But if the puck comes toward him at either side he must be ready to stop it with a skate or his stick.

"Goal-tend should be warmly dressed because

WITH THE FIRST TEAM

he does not get so much exercise as the other players. Moleskin trousers are better than khaki or cotton because warmer. He should wear a light sweater and have well-padded gloves. A goal-tend's stick should be short with a broad blade. Some players prefer a built-up stick, but it must not be more than three inches wide at any place."

But memorizing all this didn't make Toby a wonderful goal-tend. It doubtless helped him, but it is one thing to know what to do and quite another thing to do it. Probably a week of practice was worth fully as much as all his reading. On the other hand, it is possible that his reading made it easier for him to understand what was wanted of him and to profit by criticism. Grover Beech, the second team captain, was not a very good instructor. He played a good game himself at cover point and knew how the other positions should be played, but he lacked the ability to impart information. Rather impatient and short-tempered, he was far more likely to send a player who had performed poorly off the ice and summon a substitute than attempt to show the offender how to do better. In consequence, Toby, to a great extent, was thrown on his own resources when it

GUARDING HIS GOAL

came to learning the science of the goal-tend's position. But he watched the first team goals and tried to fashion his play on theirs, seldom offended twice in the same way and, when he had been two weeks a member of the second squad, had defeated Warren in the struggle for supremacy.

So far he had not dug into his hockey fund except to the extent of the price of his new stick. He wore an old pair of running trunks loaned by Homer Wilkins, a sweater of his own, a pair of ordinary thick gloves of buckskin, and, for want of a toque such as the others wore, went bare-headed. Arnold's second-best skates performed all he asked of them and an ancient pair of leg-guards, inherited by the Hockey Club from some former player, answered their purpose fairly well. He meant, however, to have his own guards and a good pair of gloves, and, now that it seemed certain that he had won the right to play the goal position on the second for the balance of the season, he only awaited an opportunity to journey to Greenburg to purchase them. But on most mornings recitations kept him busy and every afternoon was occupied with practice, and so it was the

WITH THE FIRST TEAM

Thursday of Yardley's third contest that the opportunity at last occurred. But before that other events of interest had happened.

There was, for example, the hockey game with Carrel's School, the second contest on the Yardley schedule. Carrel's presented a strong and experienced seven, of which two members were past-masters in the gentle art of shooting goals from all sorts of impossible angles. Dave Henry, the Blue's goal-tend, was considered rather a competent youth, but that Saturday afternoon he had his hands full, so full, in fact, that he couldn't begin to hold all that came to them, with the result that Carrel's School led six goals to one at the end of the first twenty-minute period and in the last half, in spite of Yardley's frantic, determined endeavors to hold her at bay and score a few tallies herself, quite swept the Blue's defense off its feet and scored pretty much as she wanted to. It was a rattling good game, in spite of its one-sidedness and the audience which lined the barrier, stamping its feet and blowing on its numbed fingers, yelled itself quite hoarse before the referee's whistle blew for the last time. Seventeen to four was the score then, and although the Yardley players gathered

GUARDING HIS GOAL

together and waved their sticks and cheered tiredly for their rivals, there was a noticeable lack of enthusiasm in that cheer. The wiseacres had to go back three years before they could find another such overwhelming defeat. Captain Crowell took the beating somewhat to heart, and even Arnold, who was not easily cast-down, moped all the evening and refused to be comforted by Homer or Toby or any one else.

On the following Monday Framer took Flagg's place at point and Rose gave way to Fanning at left wing. Also Crowell experimented with the four-man defense style of play, which, while not so good for scoring, at least is theoretically a fine style to keep your goal inviolate. Crumbie was played back with Halliday on defense, leaving only three men to meet the opposing attack until it was well down toward the goal. The second team was summoned onto the ice "to be the goat," as Sid Creel phrased it, and there was a very pretty struggle. The second swept through that four-man defense for three goals in each period, causing Captain Crowell grave doubts as to the value of it. But the first won, for neither Warren, who played through the first period, or

WITH THE FIRST TEAM

Toby, who officiated in the second, could stop more than half the shots of the first team forwards. Sid Creel, slow-moving and apparently sleepy, was a tower of strength at point that afternoon, and Beech was as clever as usual at cover, but Crowell and Arnold Deering were slippery skaters and accurate shots, and the illusive puck went into the second's net nine times in all.

The next day the four-man back idea worked better, Crumbie having by then a better knowledge of his duties on defense and refusing to be drawn out of position. Beech sought to meet the first team's new tactics by adapting the Canadian scheme of playing three forwards abreast and the fourth behind. Beech selected the part of rover, but it can't be said that he made a shining success of it. In any event, the first regained its old superiority over the scrub seven and won easily. And, with a few exceptions, every following day witnessed a similar result until, near the middle of the season, one Toby Tucker willed otherwise.

Greenburg High School followed Carrel's and met overwhelming defeat at the hands of the Blue. But Greenburg was inexperienced and her players were poor skaters and the result had been ex-

GUARDING HIS GOAL

pected. The only incident meriting mention was a fine goal by Arnold Deering in the second period. Arnold had stolen the puck from a Greenburg player in front of his own goal, had evaded the forwards, passed to Crowell near the middle of the ice and had then received the puck back again when the Greenburg cover point had challenged. The pass, however, had gone behind him and he had had to turn and take it as it carromed off the boards. He was not then in position to shoot and so, after breaking past a member of the enemy team, he skated in, seeking a chance to pass back to Crowell. Crowell shouted and Arnold slid the puck along the ice, but at that moment a Greenburg youth charged into Crowell and the puck dribbled by. Fanning should have rescued it, but Fanning was far over at the other side and skating hard, and the Greenburg cover point was the lucky one. But the cover point hesitated just an instant too long and Arnold, doubling back, swept past him, stole the disc from under his nose, dodged two opponents and bore down on the Greenburg point. Crowell, who had sprawled on the ice, tried to get into position for the pass, but was too late, and Arnold, sensing it, dodged the point,

WITH THE FIRST TEAM

keeping the puck away from the latter's swinging stick by a veritable miracle, circled the net at the rear and then, as he headed back close to the goal, slipped the puck deftly between the post and the goal-tend's skate. As he did so two of the enemy crashed into him, the net careened, the goal-tend sat down on the ice and in an instant the air was full of kicking legs and thrashing sticks. But the puck had gone in before the upset and the goal umpire's hand had already been raised when he was forced to flee from the careening net.

Greenburg protested somewhat perfunctorily and the audience cheered. And Arnold was hauled out of the melee with a two-inch gash over his left eye that put him out of the contest and gave him a desperate, piratical look for several days.

Of course, viewed from the standpoint of perfect hockey, Arnold's exploit was nothing to cheer for. When a wing player has to skate all over the shop and finally hook the puck in from back of goal he naturally suggests to the unbiased mind that there was a lamentable absence of team-play; which there was. Captain Crowell knew better than to praise that performance. Instead,

GUARDING HIS GOAL

he told Arnold that it was good skating, blamed himself for letting the cover point upset him and waded into Fanning for being out of position. But the audience liked it immensely and for some days Arnold's exploit was the subject of enthusiastic praise.

I forgot to say that the score of the Yardley-Greenburg High game was 16 to 3. Not that it matters greatly, however.

You are not to suppose that Toby spent all his time and thought on the enticing game of hockey. On the contrary, Toby was putting in some good licks at studying about this time. For one thing, he felt in honor bound to vindicate the faculty's selection of T. Tucker as a recipient of a Ripley Scholarship, and for another thing mid-year examinations were on. "Mid-years" are serious things, and it behooves a chap to buckle down and get himself up on his studies, and especially those studies which, all during the Fall Term, he has sort of squeezed through on. So Toby worked hard and burned much midnight oil — only it happened to be gas — and did excellently well in everything save Latin and not so very badly in that. Poor Homer Wilkins came several croppers and for a

WITH THE FIRST TEAM

time anticipated severing his connection with the school. But he managed by dint of many solemn promises and extraordinary application to weather the storm. Arnold, too, had his troubles, but they were not serious. Only two members of the first hockey team found themselves in hot water, Henry and Dunphy, and these were barred from playing until they had removed their conditions. There was said to be some doubt about Dunphy's return to the team that season, but Henry's absence from the ice was believed to be a matter of only a fortnight. Orson Crowell accepted the matter philosophically. After all, things might have been worse. He recalled one occasion, in his third class year, when exactly six of a hockey squad of fifteen had been put on probation after mid-years. Remembering that, he concluded that the temporary loss of Henry and the possibly final loss of Dunphy were not worth worrying about. Frank Lamson took Henry's place at the net and tried very hard to fill Henry's shoes. He never succeeded, however, even though, the week after the Greenburg game, an old-boy and former hockey captain named Loring, patriotically responded to the call for aid and put in five days of

GUARDING HIS GOAL

coaching, paying a great deal of attention to the goal-tend. But even Alfred Loring could not make a perfect net-man of Frank Lamson, although Frank did improve quite perceptibly, and it was thought advisable to draw on the second team for a substitute pending Henry's release from probation, and the choice fell naturally on Toby, who, by that time had plainly shown his superiority to Warren.

And so, one cold and bleak Thursday afternoon, Toby found himself practicing with the first, sliding from one side to the other of the south goal while Stillwell and Gladwin and Casement and Rose rushed down upon him, passing the puck from stick to stick, and finally whanged the disk at him. He didn't make a very brilliant showing that afternoon, although he tried harder than he had ever tried, for the first team substitutes had unusual luck in lifting the puck and time after time it sped past him, knee-high, to nestle in the folds of the net.

But his lack of success didn't make him downcast, for he had formed a wonderful resolution. It was to play goal better than Frank, so that they would have to keep him on the

WITH THE FIRST TEAM

first. I am afraid that the vision of Frank Lamson being relegated to the scrubs had something to do with Toby's cheerfulness. But then, Toby didn't pretend to be fond of Frank, and he was quite human.

CHAPTER XI

TRADE FALLS OFF

THE class hockey teams were hard at it by now, for the weather had settled down to a fine imitation of an old-fashioned winter. The baseball candidates and the track and field fellows were, perhaps, not over-enthusiastic about it, and those who played golf made derogatory remarks anent it, but some seventy boys who swung hockey sticks each afternoon asked nothing better. The river was frozen five inches deep and provided even better ice than the first team had on shore. Two rinks were established opposite the boat house and on those the four class teams skated and slashed and shouted every afternoon in preparation for the three or four games which would later decide the school championship. So far snow had been scarce, but what had fallen still lay, crusted and glittering. Indoors the track

TRADE FALLS OFF

athletes were awaking from their hibernation and beginning the early drudgery that was to prepare them for outdoor work. Even baseball was talked, although indoor practice for that did not begin for another three weeks. January and February, for those who find no outdoor interests, are dull months at school, and Toby was very thankful that he had gone in for hockey.

Business was none too good just now. It is hard to get one's clothes soiled when snow covers the world or when one doesn't get out of doors often. Of course one would suppose that weather or time of year would have no effect on the business of pressing trousers and coats, but it seemed to, and Toby's trade was almost at a stand-still toward the beginning of February. When Temple came around to solicit a reinsertion of Toby's modest advertisement in *The Scholiast*, the school monthly, Toby was of two minds, whether to withdraw his card or make it larger. In the end he decided to offer special prices for February, and Billy Temple, sitting on the edge of the bed, wrote out the advertisement.

GUARDING HIS GOAL

CLOTHES CLEANED AND PRESSED

Special Reductions for February

Trousers Cleaned.	.25 Cents	Trousers Pressed	10 Cents
Coats Cleaned . . .	35 Cents	Coats Pressed . . .	20 Cents
Suits, including Waist-coats, Cleaned	60 Cents	Suits Pressed . . .	35 Cents

Overcoats in Proportion

My Work Is Equal to the Best

Give Me a Trial

GET YOUR WARDROBE IN ORDER NOW FOR SPRING

T. TUCKER, 22 WHITSON HALL

Lack of trade didn't worry Toby as much as it would have had he not won that scholarship, but he was glad when, that same evening, young Lingard knocked apologetically and presented himself and four articles of apparel to be cleaned and pressed. There was the same suit that Toby had toilsomely freed from its adornment of green paint, and an extra pair of trousers. This time the suit was spattered with some red-brown stuff, the nature of which Tommy Lingard was at a loss, or pretended to be at a loss, to explain. Toby frowned over it and finally said it looked like iron rust, but Lingard expressed doubts.

"Well, I dare say it will come out," said Toby.
"Most everything does except acid. Fellows

TRADE FALLS OFF

ruin their things at chemistry and then wonder why I don't get the spots out of them. I'll have these ready to-morrow evening. By the way, Lingard, you never paid me for the last job, you know."

" Didn't I really? " The boy's voice expressed the greatest surprise, but Toby wasn't fooled. " H-how much was it? "

" Seventy-five," answered Toby, referring to his memorandum book.

" I'm sorry, really." Lingard searched his pockets and finally produced a crumpled dollar bill from some recess, and Toby tried to dig up a quarter in change. But sixteen cents was the best he could do, and he was on the point of suggesting that the quarter be applied on the new account when he remembered the hockey fund. He crossed to the bureau and pulled the little box from its concealment and abstracted two dimes and a nickel. Lingard was deeply interested in the gas-stove when Toby came back — Toby had just finished pressing a pair of his own trousers — and didn't turn around until Toby spoke.

" Here you are, Lingard. Twenty-five cents. Much obliged. Will you come for these or shall I leave them in your room? "

GUARDING HIS GOAL

"I'll come and get them, thanks, Tucker. To-morrow evening, you said?"

"Yes, any time after nine. Good-night."

Lingard went off and Toby, after draping the garments on a hanger, turned out his light and padded downstairs to see Arnold. It was against the rules to use any cleansing fluid in the buildings after dark and so Toby's cleansing operations had to be done in the daytime. He found Arnold and Homer playing host to Fanning and Halliday. There was a box of biscuits open on the window-seat and Homer had fashioned a pitcherful of orange-colored liquid which the fellows were drinking from glasses and tooth-mugs. Homer kept an assortment of bottled fruit-juices and could be relied on to produce a sweet and sickening beverage at a moment's notice. Toby declined the mugful of "Wilkins' Orange Nectar" offered him, but helped himself to the biscuits and made himself as comfortable as he could on Arnold's bed.

"Don't get the crumbs in there, for the love of lemons," warned Arnold. "I never could sleep comfortably on cracker crumbs."

Homer chuckled. "Say, Arn, remember the

TRADE FALLS OFF

time we filled Garfield's bed with crackers? Gee, that was a riot!"

"What was it?" prompted Ted Halliday, holding out his glass for more "nectar."

"Why, Garfield got fresh one time," recounted Arnold, "and came in here when we were out and pied the room. It was an awful mess when I got back. He had turned all the pictures around, and stuffed a suit of Homer's clothes with pillows and put it in my bed, and — oh, just raised Cain generally. He thought he was awfully funny, I guess. You remember him, Fan?"

Fanning nodded, but Halliday looked blank.

"A big, round-faced fellow," reminded Homer. "Roomed in 14 last year, with Dickerman. Played guard on the second for awhile."

"Oh, yes, I remember. Say, what became of him, anyway? He isn't here this year, is he?"

"No, he didn't come back. Went to Andover or somewhere up that way," answered Arnold. "Well, anyway, Homer and I decided we'd get even with him. Homer's folks had just sent a box and there was about a half a dozen boxes of soda crackers in it. So we emptied the lot in Garfield's bed. Sort of spread them around neatly

GUARDING HIS GOAL

and then tidied everything up again so you wouldn't ever think it had been touched. But afterwards we thought that maybe he would just pick the crackers out and eat them. So we went over and visited him that evening about nine and sat on his bed. The way —”

“ I thought every time we moved he'd hear the silly things go *crunch!* ” laughed Homer. “ But he didn't. We made an awful lot of noise —”

“ He wanted us to sit in chairs,” chuckled Arnold, “ but we told him we preferred the bed. Said we were dead tired and wanted to lean back. After a bit we got to rough-housing, just to finish the job nicely, and we had it all over the bed, the crackers crunching finely. We had to shout and howl so he wouldn't hear them. He said we were a couple of silly idiots and if we didn't cut it out ‘ Muscles ’ would hear the row and be up. So we let up after we'd rolled all over the bed and said good-night to him and hoped he'd have a nice, restful sleep, and went home.”

“ Did he? ” laughed Fanning.

“ Like anything! After his light went out Homer and I opened the door and listened. We didn't have to listen long, though. We heard him

TRADE FALLS OFF

mutter something and then there was a roar and he landed out in the middle of the room, I guess. We saw the light go on again and—well, we thought we'd better go to bed about then. Which we did, locking the door very, very carefully first. He almost broke it in before Mr. Bendix came bounding upstairs to see what the trouble was!"

"Yes," added Homer, "and the low-life told 'Muscles' about it and showed him the bed! Garfield was one of those chaps who just love a joke—as long as it isn't on him!"

"What did 'Muscles' do?" asked Halliday delightedly.

"Not a thing. Told Garfield to shake his sheets out and go to bed. But he wouldn't speak to either of us for days and days; Garfield, I mean. Seemed real peeved at us!"

"I'll bet worse things than that have happened to him at Andover, or wherever he is," chuckled Fanning. "It doesn't take long to find out a fellow who can't stand a joke, and then every one has a whack at him. Garfield was a pill, anyway. I played left half that year on the scrub, and Garfield was always funking. Just let some

GUARDING HIS GOAL

one kick him in the shins and he was ready to quit. Talking about shins, fellows, I wish you'd see the peach that I'm wearing just now. Every time any fellow swings his stick it gets my left shin. I've got a regular map on it, with every state a different color. I'm thinking of getting a pair of leg-guards like Tucker wears. Those shin pads they give us aren't any good. Casement doesn't even know they're there when he gets to slashing. I never saw a chap who could bang around with his stick the way he can, and get away with it. Some day though, he will make me lose my temper, and when he does he's going to get something to remember."

"Tut, tut," said Halliday, soothingly. "What's a crack on the shin between friends? Save your revenge, Fan, and work it off on Broadwood."

"Yes, you'll have Tony Spaulding to fight then," said Arnold.

"Is he such a wonder?" asked Fanning.

"You saw him last year, didn't you?"

"Yes, but I didn't think he was anything remarkable. He — "

"He scored six of their ten goals," said

TRADE FALLS OFF

Arnold. "That's doing fairly well, isn't it?"

"Yes, I dare say, but Henry let a lot of shots get by him that never ought to have been caged. Say, when's Hen coming back? Lamson's an awful frost as a goal-tend."

"About two weeks from now, he thinks," replied Halliday. "He flunked in German and got about a dozen conditions in other things."

"Only a dozen?" asked Homer. "Well, if it takes him as long to make up as it's going to take me he will be back about June."

"I wish he was back now," said Fanning, gloomily. "Warren Hall won't do a thing to us to-morrow. Those chaps were born with hockey sticks in their mouths, I guess."

"Frank hasn't made a bad showing," said Arnold. "I don't say he's as good as Henry, but I think he's a pretty fair goal-tend."

"Lamson couldn't stop a medicine-ball if you rolled it at him," jeered Fanning. "Maybe he might if he'd stick around the net, but he thinks he has to skate out and play point most of the time. Loring told him yesterday that if he didn't stay where he could touch the net all the time he'd have him tied to it."

GUARDING HIS GOAL

"You're prejudiced, I guess," said Arnold warmly. "Other fellows think Frank's doing mighty well. I've heard lots of them say so, too. He hasn't had the experience that Henry's had, of course, but he certainly made some nice stops to-day."

"All right, I don't know anything about it," agreed Fanning. "But I do know that Warren Hall will shoot him so full of holes to-morrow that he will look like a blooming sieve. Why, hang it, Arn, Toby Tucker here can play goal better than Lamson right now! And Tucker never played hockey until this winter!"

"Neither did Frank — much," defended Arnold. "He played about a month on the second last year —"

"He may get the hang of it," interposed Ted Halliday, entering the discussion, "but I think you're dead wrong, Arn, when you say he can play goal. To my mind he was never meant for a goal-tend. He'd make a much better cover point, because he's a good stick-handler and skates well and is heavy enough to keep his feet when he's checked. But he's dead slow at the net. If Henry doesn't get back I'll wager you anything

TRADE FALLS OFF

you like that Tucker plays goal against Broadwood."

"Right!" agreed Fanning. Arnold shrugged his shoulders. Toby sat up suddenly and almost choked on the cracker he was eating.

"Me!" he ejaculated.

"Surest thing you know," asserted Fanning. "If Henry doesn't work off his conditions —"

"There's only you and Lamson," interrupted Halliday. "Unless they swipe some fellow from the second, and I don't know who he'd be. You're a heap better than Warren, aren't you?"

"I—I suppose I'm a little better," allowed Toby.

"Yes, and Warren's a lot better than that new fellow, Guild. All you'll have to do is to beat out Lamson, and if you can't do that I hope you choke." This was from Fanning. Arnold laughed.

"I'd be glad to see Toby get it," he said, "but I don't believe Lamson is as bad as you fellows think he is. Anyway, Crowell is satisfied with him."

"Crowell doesn't let you know whether he's satisfied or dissatisfied," said Halliday. "Still,

GUARDING HIS GOAL

I don't care who plays goal for us as long as he stops Broadwood from scoring. That's the main thing, I guess. I've got to trot. Coming along, Fan? No more juice of the sun-kissed orange, thanks, Homer. I'm full of it now. I'll bet I've got enough different kinds of chemicals inside me to stock a laboratory!"

"You have not!" denied Homer indignantly. "That's pure fruit-juice untouched by the human hand and passed by the board of censors."

Halliday and Fanning took their departure, laughing, and Toby, so far a very silent member of the party, broached the object of his visit.

"I wish you'd go over to Greenburg with me in the morning, Arn, and help me buy some leg-guards and a pair of gloves. Will you?"

"Of course, if I can. What time?"

"Eleven? You don't have anything then, do you?"

"Not on Saturday. All right. We won't take Homer, though. He indulges in too much levity on such solemn occasions."

"Thanks, but Homer wouldn't go if he was asked. Homer has given his promise to expunge three conditions between now and the fifteenth day

TRADE FALLS OFF

of February, and what Homer promises, that he performs." His expression of implacable virtue was, however, somewhat marred by a cavernous yawn. "Still, if you really need my advice, Toby—"

"No, thanks, I'm not buying neckties to-morrow."

With which *bon-mot* Toby closed the door behind him before Homer could think of a suitable rejoinder.

CHAPTER XII

THE MARKED COIN

FRANK LAMSON was coming along the corridor as Toby reached the top of the last flight. The fact that Stillwell's door was open indicated that Frank had been paying a visit to the substitute cover point. Toby was for passing with a nod and a word, but Frank, who seemed to be in unusually good humor, stopped.

"Hello, Sober Sides," he greeted. "What's the good word?"

"Hello, Frank," answered Toby without much enthusiasm. "How are you?"

"Oh, fine! How do you like playing on a real team, Toby?"

"Pretty well. I'll probably like it better when I get more — more used to it. I dare say you found it hard at first, didn't you?"

"Rather! You wait till you have Crowell and Arn and those chaps shooting at you. Then you'll know what playing goal really is. Say, I

THE MARKED COIN

heard that Dave Henry isn't coming back. Know anything about it?"

Toby shook his head. "No. They were talking about it to-night in Arn's room, but I got the idea that he expected to get off probation in two or three weeks."

"Two or three weeks?" Frank repeated calculatingly. "That would make it just before the Broadwood game. Well, I don't wish him any bad luck, but I'd like it just as well if he didn't." Frank grinned and winked expressively. "I'd sort of like to play goal myself against Broadwood, you see."

"You think that if Henry didn't get back you'd play?" asked Toby innocently.

"Sure thing! Why not? Who else is there?" asked Frank in surprise. "Unless you think you're going to do it." Frank was plainly amused.

"Well, if anything happened to you," said Toby gravely, "I might have a chance."

"Nothing's going to happen to me, Tobias. So don't set your hope on that," chuckled Frank. "What could happen, eh?"

"Well, you might fall downstairs and break

GUARDING HIS GOAL

something, or you might have measles or scarlet fever—”

“Don’t be an idiot,” growled the other. “I dare say you’d like something to happen, though. I guess it wouldn’t do you much good, however. You’re too green yet, son.”

“I suppose so,” agreed Toby reluctantly. “I dare say it will take me a long time to learn to play goal the way you do, Frank.”

Frands nodded, placated and cheerful again. “Oh, I’m not such a much,” he replied. “I can’t play the game Henry can yet, but I haven’t had the practice he’s had. But if he stays out another two weeks or so it might just happen that we wouldn’t want him so much. That chap Loring’s a great coach. He’s showing me a lot of things. I’ll bet you that in another week they won’t be getting ’em by me so’s you’ll notice it, Toby.”

“Yes, a lot can happen in a week.” Toby agreed thoughtfully.

“Right-o! Well, good-night. How’s business? Still pressing? Oh, by the way, old scout, I still owe you a small bit, don’t I?”

“One dollar, five,” answered Toby promptly.

“All right. I’ll pay that to-morrow, Toby. I

THE MARKED COIN

really meant to settle it long ago, but you know how it is. I blew in so much money at Christmas that I came back stoney-broke. There's a chap owes me a couple of dollars, and I'll collect it to-morrow and pay you, Toby. Good-night."

Frank went off, whistling cheerfully, and Toby entered his room and spread his books out. "I wish he would pay me," he muttered. "But I don't suppose he will. And I wish—I wish I knew where he got that scarf-pin!"

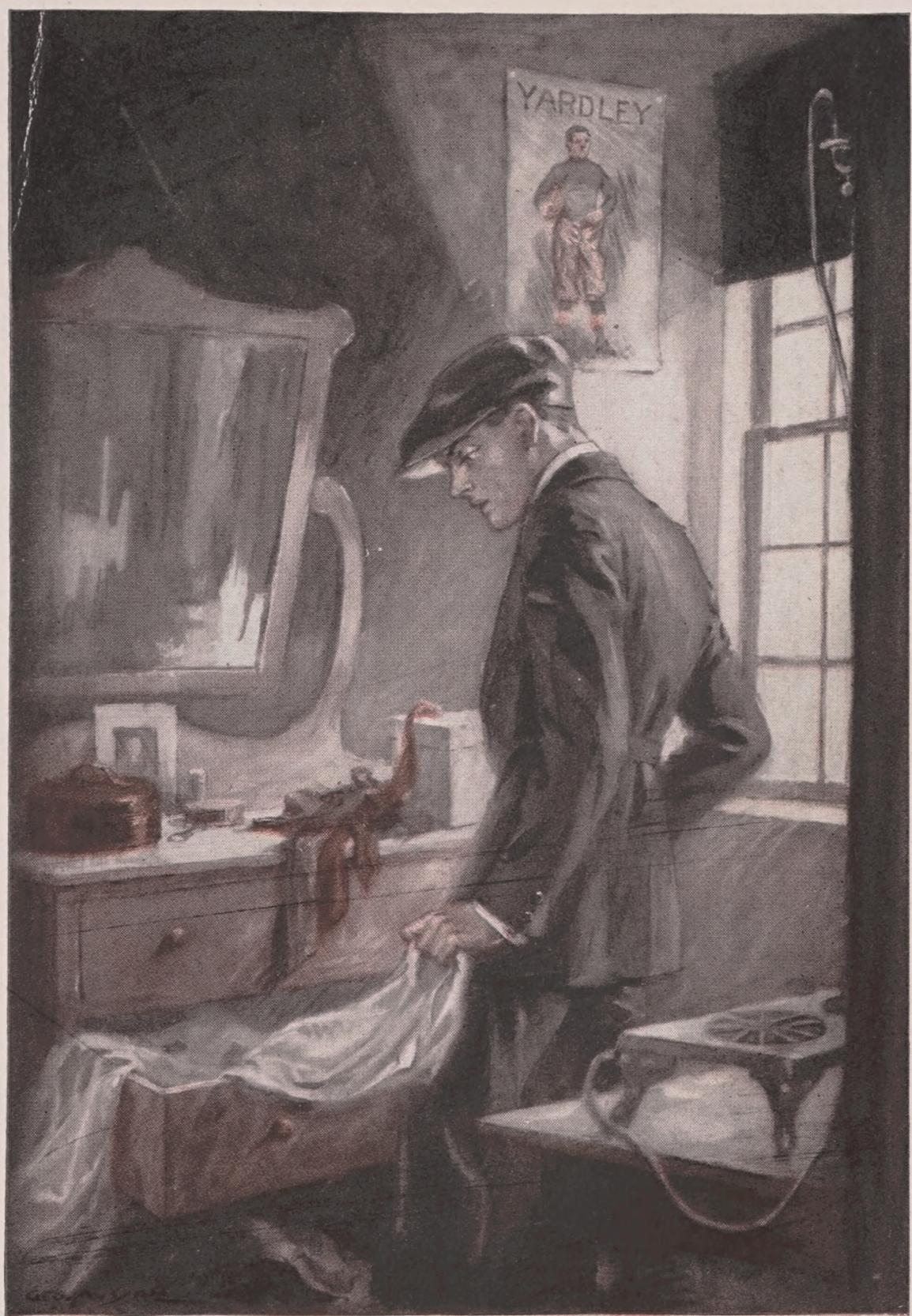
Toby hurried out of Mr. Gladdis's English class the next forenoon at a minute after eleven and scurried across to Whitson and up two flights of stairs. In his room he dumped his books on the table, slipped on a sweater under his jacket, put on his cap and then paused before the door and thoughtfully patted his pockets. Wasn't there something else? Of course! He must take some money with him! So he went to the bureau and, pulling open the second drawer, rummaged around for the little pasteboard box that held his Hockey Fund.

"That's funny," he murmured, turning over the scanty contents of the drawer. Finally he pulled everything out. The little box was cer-

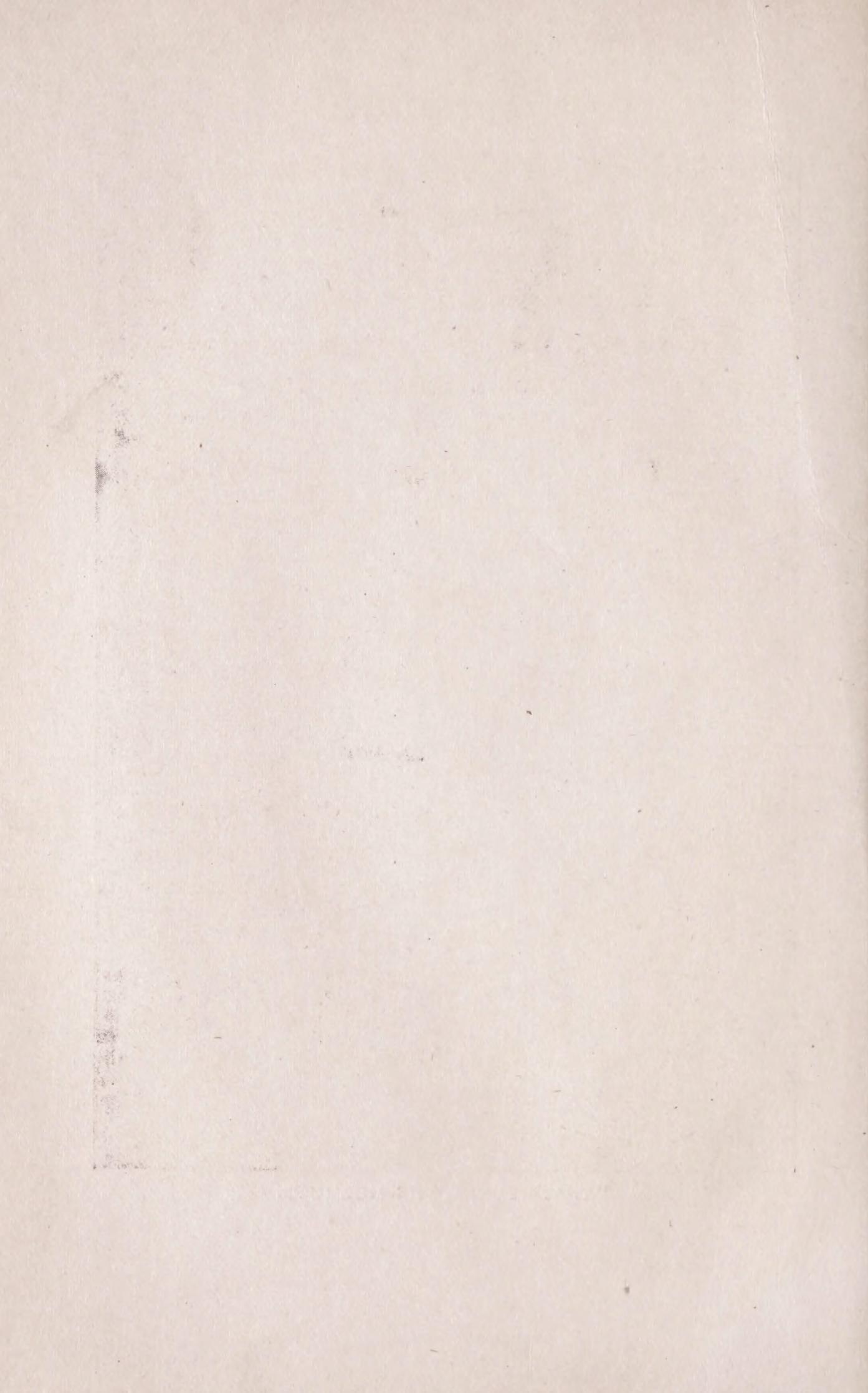
GUARDING HIS GOAL

tainly not there! He shook each garment and put it back hurriedly and agitatedly, and still no box came to light. He looked searchingly about the room, on the table, on the bureau, even on the floor. Then he went through the other drawers, tossing their contents about anxiously. Finally, at a loss, he stopped and, plunging his hands into his pockets, frowned at the floor.

"I had it out last night," he recalled. "I made change for Tommy Lingard. But I didn't take it away from the bureau and I remember putting it right back again. At least, I'm *almost* sure. I suppose I might have dropped it in my pocket. But I had these clothes on —" He ransacked his pockets, but without success. Then: "It *must* be here," he muttered, and once more he searched the second drawer in the bureau, again taking everything out and shaking it thoroughly. But there was no box and no six dollars and a quarter! It was certainly puzzling! To make certain that he had not put the contents of the box in his pocket, he turned his pockets inside-out. Sixteen cents, mostly in coppers, that crumpled dollar bill that Lingard had given him, a knife, a bone button that belonged on his overcoat and a



"THAT'S FUNNY," HE MURMURED



THE MARKED COIN

skate key emerged from his trousers. His waist-coat yielded his memorandum-book and a leather case containing a fountain pen and two pencils. From his coat he extracted a handkerchief, a small roll of lead wire, the inch-long remains of a third pencil, a letter from his mother which had reached him that morning and the end of a roll of adhesive tape. That was all. He restored the articles to his pockets, all save the letter and the button, and sank dejectedly into the dilapidated arm-chair.

At that moment footsteps came along the hall and Arnold called: "Are you there, Toby?"

"Yes," was the dismal response. "Come on in."

"It's nearly twenty minutes past eleven—" began Arn, appearing in the doorway. Then he caught sight of Toby's dejected countenance and stopped. "Hello, what's the matter, Toby?"

"I can't find my money."

"Can't find it? Where was it?"

"In the bureau drawer. It was in a little box and I hid it under some things there. And now it's gone!"

"Oh, feathers! Look again. How much was it?"

GUARDING HIS GOAL

"I have looked again. There was six dollars and a quarter in it."

Arn whistled expressively and viewed the still open drawer. "Let me have a look," he said. But he was no more successful than Toby had been. "You probably put it somewhere else," he suggested brightly. "Have you looked in the other drawers?"

"I've looked everywhere," answered Toby sadly. "It—it just isn't anywhere!"

"You don't suppose—you don't suppose any one's taken it, do you?" asked Arnold, frowning.

"No one knew it was there. Besides, no one ever comes in here except Nellie."

"Well, Nellie wouldn't take it. She's been goody here for years. So, if no one took it, it must be around somewhere. Come on and let's make a thorough search, Toby."

Ten minutes later they acknowledged defeat.

"I'm awfully sorry, Toby," said Arnold. "But maybe it will turn up yet. Things do, you know, when you're not looking for them. I guess, anyway, it's too late to go to Greenburg now, for I promised Frank I'd play pool with him in the club at twelve. I'd lend you the money, but I'm just

THE MARKED COIN

about broke. I say, though, they'll charge stuff to you, Toby. They aren't supposed to, but they do it right along. Lots of fellows have accounts in Greenburg. If faculty doesn't get on to it you're all right — as long as you don't let things run too long. Maybe we can get over Monday after dinner."

"What's the good of having them charged if I can't pay for them?" asked Toby morosely. "Anyway, I wouldn't dare to. When you win a scholarship you have to be mighty careful, don't you?"

"I don't know," laughed Arnold. "I never won one yet. Well, cheer up, old man. You'll run across that money when you aren't expecting to. Come along up to Cambridge and play pool."

"I don't know how, thanks. You go ahead."

"Well, come and watch me beat Frank then."

But Toby refused and presently Arnold hurried away to keep his appointment, leaving Toby staring disappointedly after him. "He'd rather play pool with Frank than help me find my money," he told himself. Considering that Arnold had put in a good ten minutes of searching, that was rather unjust, but Toby was in no mood to judge persons

GUARDING HIS GOAL

or things fairly just now. "If it had been he who lost it," Toby muttered resentfully, "I'd have stayed around and helped him find it. I wish I'd asked him to tell Frank to bring around that dollar and five cents!"

Presently he set to work restoring the room to its wonted tidiness, always hoping that the Hockey Fund would turn up. But it didn't, and when things were once more in place he banged the door behind him and went downstairs and loafed disconsolately around the Prospect until dinner time. It was much too cold for comfort, but Toby found satisfaction in being miserable and cold.

He didn't see Arnold at dinner, for he went into commons early, and Arnold, staying late at the pool table in the Cambridge Club — one of the two rival social and debating clubs of which the other was known as Oxford — didn't arrive until he had gone out. Toby cleaned young Lingard's clothes after dinner, filling Number 22 with the odor of benzine, and then hung the garments on their hangers by an open window. By that time it was nearly three and Toby went over to the gymnasium and joining the throng in the locker-room, changed into hockey togs. When he reached the

THE MARKED COIN

rink Warren Hall was already hard at work, a dozen sturdy-looking youths with black-and-yellow stockings, sweaters and toques. Warren yielded the ice to Yardley, Toby and Frank skated to the goals and ten minutes of practice followed. Today Toby's heart was not in his work and about every other shot went past him into the cage. It seemed to him that he spent most of his time hooking the puck out with the blade of his stick. But he didn't care. What Frank had said last night was probably quite true, anyway. No matter how hard he tried they'd never let him be more than a substitute this year. Even if Frank failed to make good Crowell would probably take Warren from the second to fill his place. The world was very unjust, and —

"Wake up, Tucker! Get onto your job!" cried Flagg at this point in his reflections. "I can't play point and goal too, you know!"

So Toby tapped his stick on the ice, crouched and gave a very good imitation of a goal-tend with his mind on the game. The machinations of the forwards were foiled, Toby stopping the waist-high shot with his body and whisking the puck out of the way before Gladwin could reach it. But

GUARDING HIS GOAL

the next charge was more successful, although the shot was an easy one, and possibly it was well for Toby's reputation as a coming goal-tend that the referee, a Greenburg High School teacher, blew his whistle about that time. Toby and the other substitutes skated to the boards, climbed over, donned their coats and ranged themselves on the benches. The two teams assembled about the referee and listened to his warnings and the rival captains watched the fall of the coin. Warren Hall, winning the toss, took the south goal. The players skated to position. For Yardley, Frank Lamson was at goal, Framer at point, Halliday at cover point, Crumbie at right center, Captain Crowell at left center, Arnold Deering at right end and Rose at left end. Jim Rose's return to the first line-up was accepted on the bench as evidence that he had proved his right to hold the position for the rest of the season. Crowell and a tall black-and-yellow stockinged youth faced off, the whistles blew and the game began.

Warren Hall started a march toward the Yardley goal at the outset, but the right center was so slow on his skates that the rest of the forward line were all offside before the middle of the rink was

THE MARKED COIN

reached. The puck was stopped, but Warren again secured it and her big cover point once more started down the center toward the opponent's cage. Captain Crowell intercepted him, however, and took the puck away, and then, keeping a straight course with his team-mates abreast, he skated down to the black-and-yellow goal and shot through the outer defense for the first tally. Crowell had made no attempt to fool the defenders and his success was due to the fact that the Warren Hall goal-tend had the puck hidden from him by his skates. Some three minutes later Yardley caged the disk again after a very pretty exhibition of team work by Captain Crowell and Jim Rose. Crowell carried the puck down the ice and passed it to Rose near the Warren Hall goal. Rose slid it back to Crowell and the latter snapped it in. Yardley's cheers, however, were quickly stilled, for a forward pass had been detected and the tally was not allowed.

Subsequent to this disappointment Yardley tried hard to score, but were unable to do so because of the stubborn defense of the black-and-yellow goal-tend, who during the ensuing ten minutes made some really remarkable stops. On one occasion

GUARDING HIS GOAL

Arnold Deering broke through and had nothing between him and the net but the goal-tend. The latter came out and made a neat stop, the puck bounding away from his leg-guard. Had there been another Yardley player on hand to take a shot at that moment the home team would have had another goal to her credit. The Warren cover point started another of his bull-dog rushes, and, after spilling Ted Halliday head-over-heels, himself came to grief when he bumped Framer and went sprawling along the ice to bring up with a crash against the boards. The game slowed up after that and the referee had to warn both teams against loafing. The first period ended with the score 1 to 0 in Yardley's favor. Thus far the Blue had shown far better offensive and defensive playing, save, perhaps, in the matter of goal-tend. Frank Lamson had had but six chances and none of them had been difficult, thanks to Halliday and Framer. Yardley had lost several opportunities to score by slowing up near goal. Crumbie and Rose both showed a tendency to hesitate when a quick shot would have scored, and all save Captain Crowell showed the need of practice in shooting.

THE MARKED COIN

When the second period began Warren again scored the puck at the face-off and took the offensive. She at once invaded Yardley territory, but the man with the puck was "knifed" by Halliday and Framer. The puck went up and down the rink, with neither team showing much in the way of team-play. A scrimmage in front of the Warren Hall cage gave Arnold his chance to shoot the disk past the goal-tend, but again a forward pass was called and again Yardley had to swallow her disappointment. Shortly after that Crumbie was sent off for one minute for loafing, and Warren Hall tried desperately to penetrate the Yardley outer guard, but lost the puck after every rush. Crumbie came back with instructions from Coach Loring to keep the puck away from the Yardley goal. With five minutes of the final period left, the play became fast and furious, Yardley confining herself to the defensive. A black-and-yellow forward was sent off for tripping. Halliday stopped a long shot in front of his position and evaded the Warren Hall players to the net. But his shot went three feet wide. Warren got together with the return of the penalized player and showed a brief flash of team-work, taking the puck

GUARDING HIS GOAL

down to her opponent's goal and finally slamming a shot at Lamson. Frank caught the puck with his hand, dropped it and flicked it aside. It bounded off a skate and the Warren right center was on it like a flash. A quick lift and the puck shot into the cage, passing between Frank Lamson's body and the side of the net. Had Frank shifted himself four inches he would have made the stop, but it all happened so suddenly that he was caught unawares. The period ended with the score tied.

After a five-minute rest the teams went back to it again for a "sudden death" period, the first team scoring to win. Gladwin went in for Crumbley and Casement for Deering, and Warren Hall tried a new cover point. All kinds of chances were taken by both sevens, but to no avail. Crowell had two opportunities to bring the game to an end, but he failed to produce a tally. Once he reached the net unchecked but lost his balance and was unable to shoot. A second time his try was neatly stopped by the goal-tend. Had he followed his shot then he might still have secured a tally, but he swung to the right and the rebounding puck was slashed aside by the point. Darkness

THE MARKED COIN

made it almost impossible to see the puck now, and when, at the end of nine minutes, a flurry of snow began to fall the referee blew his whistle and brought the game to a disappointing and indecisive end.

Toby took his way back to the gymnasium through the snowy twilight with the rest. Personally he was less concerned with the disappointing outcome of the game than with the loss of his money. Of course he had wanted Yardley to win, but there are more important things in life than a hockey victory, and one of them is losing six dollars and twenty-five cents when that amount has been earned by hard labor and represents something very much like a small fortune. Every one else was talking at the top of his voice in the locker room and proving, at least to his own satisfaction, that, in spite of the final scores, the contest rightfully belonged to Yardley.

"I wish Ted Halliday would fix up a return game with them," said Framer earnestly.
"That's what I wish."

"That referee chap was crazy in the head like an onion," proclaimed Simpson, who had been detached from the second team to take Dunphy's

GUARDING HIS GOAL

place. "Every time we shot a goal he called off-side on us."

"Oh, I guess he was all right," said Jim Rose. "I know for a fact that Cap was offside that first time when I passed to him. There's no use growling at the referee, Simp."

Toby waited around a few minutes for Arnold, but when he discovered him talking with Frank Lamson, still only partly dressed, he made his way out and walked over to Whitson alone. Back in Number 22, he searched for the missing box for the fifth or sixth time. A half-hearted attempt to polish up his morrow's algebra was interrupted by the six o'clock bell and he went down to commons.

The occupants of Table 14 had recovered their spirits, if they had lost them, and were very merry that evening. Or most of them were. Toby was not. Toby satisfied a healthy hunger in almost uninterrupted silence and viewed life gloomily. Supper was half over when Arnold came in. Gladwin at once started a discussion of the game and he and Arnold, who seldom agreed on any subject under the sun, were soon at it across the board. Gladwin was a bit cocky by reason of hav-

THE MARKED COIN

ing been sent in in the overtime period and was more than ever inclined to think his own opinions about right.

"We had the game sewed up until Lamson made that rotten fluke," he declared. "Gee, a child could have stopped that shot! The puck wasn't even going fast!"

"I don't believe any fellow would have stopped it," answered Arnold stoutly. "I was right there and I saw it. Frank whisked it to the right and it hit off some one's skate and a Warren chap had a clean path to the net. It was all done in a second and Frank didn't have time to get into position again."

"Piffle! He was standing right by the left post when the shot was made," returned Gladwin. "If he had kept his eye on the puck he'd have seen it and stopped it with his body. The trouble was he lost sight of it. I tell you, if you're going to play goal —"

"Oh, you make me tired," said Arnold shortly. "If a goal-tend could stop every shot no one would ever win a game!"

"I don't expect him to stop every shot, but when it comes to an easy one like that —"

GUARDING HIS GOAL

"It wasn't an easy one, I tell you. It may have looked easy to you sitting on the bench —"

"It sure did! And it looked easy to every one else except you and Lamson, I guess. You saw it, Tucker. Did it look to you to be a hard shot to stop?"

Toby hesitated an instant. As a matter of fact, he considered Frank Lamson's failure to make the stop quite excusable, but he wasn't feeling very kindly toward Frank, nor toward Arnold either. "It looked pretty soft to me," he answered.

"Sure!" said Gladwin, triumphantly. "That's just what it was, soft!"

"Maybe you'll have a chance to stop some of those 'soft' ones," said Arnold crossly to Toby. "Then we'll see how well you can do it."

"I'll bet he'd have stopped that one," said Gladwin. "What do you say, Warren?"

The second team goal shrugged. "I wasn't in position to see the shot," he said. "But I know it's a mighty easy thing to criticize a goal-tend, Glad. Some of you fellows who think it's so easy had better get out there sometime and try a few!"

"That's right," agreed Arnold. "You have

THE MARKED COIN

a go at it sometime, Glad. I'll bet you wouldn't be so critical of others then."

"That's no argument. I'm not a goal. Lamson is, or pretends to be, and —"

"Chuck it, Glad," advised Jack Curran. "Lamson did the best he could, I guess. What's the good of throwing the harpoon into him? You wouldn't like it yourself, would you?"

"Oh, well, what does Arn want to pretend that Lamson's the finest goal-tend in the world for?" grumbled Gladwin. "I haven't got anything against Lamson, only —"

"Well, quit knocking him then," retorted Arnold. "I don't say he's a wonder. I say he's doing the best he knows how, and when a fellow does that —"

"Angels can't do more," said Homer Wilkins, soothingly. "Let's talk about something else for a minute. I'm a bit fed up on Lamson."

Toby pushed back his chair and Arnold looked up. "Wait for me, Toby, will you?" he asked.

"I've got some work to do," answered Toby stiffly.

Arnold shrugged. "Oh, all right. I just wanted to give you this. Catch!" A crumpled

GUARDING HIS GOAL

envelope fell to the table with a tinkle in front of Will Curran, and the latter passed it on to Toby.

"What is it?" asked Toby.

"Money or something. Frank asked me to give it to you this noon and I forgot all about it."

"Oh! Thanks." Toby dropped the envelope in his pocket and turned away. Homer Wilkins smiled at his plate and Kendall and young Curran exchanged winks. Toby's jealousy of Frank Lamson was no longer a secret. Arnold caught the wink, flushed, scowled and blamed Toby for the moment's embarrassment he felt. On the way upstairs Toby regretted, just as he usually did, his churlishness, and hoped that Arnold would overlook it and come up to Number 22 later. He wished that he hadn't taken sides with Gladwin, too. As little as he liked Frank Lamson, he thought that Frank had played a very good, steady game that afternoon and deserved credit. He felt that he owed Frank an apology, which did not tend to make him any more satisfied with himself. Up in his room, he pulled the envelope from his pocket and emptied the contents into his palm.

THE MARKED COIN

A half, two quarters and a five-cent piece lay there. Frank had paid in full, and Toby started to find his memorandum book and scratch off the debt. But his hand paused on its way to his vest pocket and he stepped swiftly to the light and peered curiously at the coins in his palm. An expression of amazement came to his face. Dropping all but one twenty-five cent piece on the table, he took that between his fingers and examined it, for an instant incredulously, finally with satisfaction.

The only apparent point of difference between that quarter and the other one was that just over the date the letters "E. D." had been punched into the silver. The D was indistinct, but the first letter had cut deep into the coin, as though some one had struck the cutting die an uneven blow. The letters were about half again as large as the numerals in the date, large enough to attract the attention of any one glancing at that side of the coin. There was nothing startling in the presence of the initials. Toby had frequently been possessed of coins having letters stamped or scratched on them. Nor was he at all concerned as to the identity of "E. D." What accounted for his interest was

GUARDING HIS GOAL

the fact that over a month before, in New York City, he had received that identical quarter in change at a dry goods store and that as late as twenty-four hours since it had reposed in a little paste-board box in his second bureau drawer.

CHAPTER XIII

TOMMY LINGARD EXPLAINS

TOBY seated himself at the table, rested his chin in his hands and, with the twenty-five cent piece before him, tried to think what it all meant. The quarter had been in the box, the box had mysteriously disappeared and now the quarter had turned up again. Logic told him that the person who had sent him the quarter had taken the box, but that, of course, meant theft, and, for all his dislike of Frank Lamson, he couldn't believe him a thief. Frank might be overbearing and self-important and something of a snob, and possess numerous other faults that Toby couldn't think of just at the moment, but dishonesty was another matter. Besides, Frank's folks were well-to-do, if not actually wealthy, and Frank had plenty of spending money — even if he didn't pay all his bills promptly.

Another circumstance against the logical theory was that Frank hadn't known of the existence of

GUARDING HIS GOAL

that six dollars and a quarter, much less, where it was kept. But, for that matter, neither had any one else known of it, and yet beyond the shadow of a doubt some one had taken it. Hold on, though! Perhaps some one had known of it! He had gone to the bureau when Tommy Lingard was in the room, and, although he hadn't taken the box from the drawer, Tommy might easily have guessed the existence of it. That put a new phase on the matter, and Toby frowned harder than ever. Granting that Tommy had known of the money being there, it would have been an easy thing for him to have taken it. No fellow ever locked his door at Yardley, whether he was in or out, and young Lingard might have walked into Number 22 at any time during Toby's absence. So might any one else. Frank Lamson, for instance. Somehow it seemed quite as impossible to connect Tommy Lingard with the theft of the money as it was to suspect Frank of it, though not for the same reason. Toby believed that Frank was honest. He didn't have the same conviction regarding Tommy Lingard, but Tommy was such a shy, ingenuous youngster that one couldn't imagine him having the courage to either plan a bur-

TOMMY LINGARD EXPLAINS

glary or, having planned it, carry it out. Suspecting Tommy of robbery was like suspecting a canary of murder! Still —

Toby sat back suddenly and thrust his hands into his pockets, staring at a crack in the plaster with half-closed eyes. Last night he had found Frank coming along the corridor. Because Stillwell's door had been ajar Toby had presumed that Frank had come from that room. But he might just as well have come from 22! And Frank had himself recalled the debt and offered to pay it on the morrow, just as though — as though he had suddenly come into funds! Toby wished that he knew whether Frank had really been to see Stillwell. If he hadn't —

After a moment he arose resolutely and crossed the corridor to Number 23. Stillwell was at home, and, although he had his books spread before him on the table, he was concerned with a quite different task than studying. He had three hockey sticks across his knees and was binding electric tape around the blade of one of them. He looked mildly surprised at Toby's entrance, but was cordial enough.

"I'm patching up some old sticks," he ex-

GUARDING HIS GOAL

plained. "They do well enough for practice. Sit down, Tucker. What's on your mind?"

"I can't stay, thanks," answered the visitor. "I want to ask you a question, Stillwell. You may think it's funny, and you needn't answer it if you don't want to. Anyway, I'd rather you didn't tell any one I'd asked it."

"Hello! What's the mystery? Fire away, Tucker. I'll be as silent as the grave. Only, if it's anything incriminating —"

"Did Frank Lamson visit you last night?"

"Huh? Frank Lamson?" Stillwell looked at Toby in a puzzled way and shook his head slowly. "Not last night, Tucker. Lamson hasn't been here this term as far as I know. Unless, of course, he came when I was out. But he couldn't have done that last night because I was here all the evening."

"You're — you're sure?"

"Don't be an idiot, Tucker! Of course I'm sure. What's the row, anyway?"

"It's nothing of any importance," said Toby. "Much obliged."

"You're welcome," laughed the other, "but I'll be lying awake half the night trying to solve the

TOMMY LINGARD EXPLAINS

mystery. You really oughtn't to spring anything like that, Tucker, unless you can come across with the answer!"

"I'm sorry," replied Toby apologetically. "I'd explain it if I could, but I really can't, Stillwell."

"All right, my boy. Don't let it bother you. If Lamson committed the foul deed, I hope the hounds of Justice get him."

"W-what foul deed?" stammered Toby in surprise.

Stillwell laughed again. "Don't ask me! I'm only guessing."

"Oh!" Toby's ejaculation expressed relief. He smiled. "You've been reading dime novels, I guess. Good-night, and thanks."

Outside the door the smile vanished. Of course, this new evidence was only circumstantial, but it certainly supported the original theory. What puzzled Toby chiefly, though, was why Frank should steal — that is, take the money. If Frank needed money he could probably get it any time by writing home for it. There was, Toby decided as he closed his door behind him, just one explanation, which was that Frank had done it out

TOMMY LINGARD EXPLAINS

of pure meanness! But that wasn't a very satisfactory explanation, after all. Further reflection was interrupted by Tommy Lingard, who came for his clothes. While Toby was taking them from the hangers he studied the younger boy intently. Tommy Lingard was thirteen, a pink-and-white youngster with light brown hair and a pair of big dark blue eyes. He was a handsome youth, in spite of a very turned-up nose, and had a rather engaging way of coloring shyly when spoken to. No, thought Toby, this picture of innocence could never have stolen the money. Nevertheless Toby remarked carelessly as he folded the clothes on the end of the table:

"Sorry I was out when you came before, Lingard."

The other boy reddened, but his eyes only grew rounder in surprise. "I — I didn't come before, Tucker," he said. "I thought they wouldn't be ready until to-night."

"Oh, I sort of thought you did," replied Toby. "Here you are, then."

"Th-thanks. How m-much is it, please?" stammered Lingard.

"A dollar and twenty. I won't charge for

TOMMY LINGARD EXPLAINS

pressing the extra trousers, Lingard. They didn't need much."

Tommy Lingard fished in his trousers pocket and drew out two folded bills and some change. One of the bills was of two-dollar denomination and the other of one. Lingard handed the latter to Toby and selected two dimes from amongst the coins. "That's right, isn't it?" he asked.

"Y-yes," replied Toby. He was looking curiously at the dollar bill and apparently didn't see the change that Lingard was holding out to him. "Yes, that's right," he went on. "Much obliged."

"Here's the twenty cents," said the other.

"Oh, yes, thanks." Toby accepted it. Then his gaze went back to the bill. Lingard walked toward the door.

"G-good-night," he said.

"Good-night, Lingard." Then, as the door was shutting behind the youngster, Toby called. "I say, Lingard, just a moment, please!"

"Yes?" Lingard's voice sounded faint.

"Er — you don't happen to know where you got this, do you?" asked Toby, holding the bill out. Lingard retraced his steps slowly and

GUARDING HIS GOAL

looked at it. There was a full moment of silence. Then:

"N-no, I don't," Lingard said slowly. "You see, I—" He stopped. "Why, of course I do!" he exclaimed triumphantly then. "I'd forgotten. Frank Lamson gave it to me this morning. I owed him a dollar and he asked me for it and I gave him a two-dollar bill. Is—isn't it all right?"

"Oh, yes, I—I just wondered. It's been torn, you see, and mended with a strip of court-plaster. It struck me that the court-plaster was a—a funny thing to patch a bill with. Maybe Frank did it, eh?"

"He might have. I—I guess it's just as good, isn't it?"

"Oh, certainly. You're sure he gave it to you, eh?"

"Yes, I remember quite well now," replied Lingard promptly. "I borrowed a dollar of him last term to pay for having my trunk mended, and I forgot all about it until this morning—"

"You and Frank are friends, then?"

"Oh, yes. We live in the same street in New York, you know. Sometimes he borrows from

TOMMY LINGARD EXPLAINS

me — when I have it." Lingard paused. Then: "If you don't mind, Tucker, I'd rather you didn't mention it to any one. I guess he wouldn't want it known."

"Why not?"

"Why — why, you see, other fellows might want to borrow from him. I — I'd rather you didn't, please."

"All right, Lingard. Good-night."

When the visitor's footsteps had died away on the stairs Toby sat himself down at the table again, spread the dollar bill before him and then from the table drawer produced a little case containing three sheets of court-plaster. One was pink, one white and one black. The pink was whole, the black had been reduced to about half its original size and the white had had a strip about a quarter of an inch wide cut from its lower edge. Toby looked intently from that oblong of white sticking-plaster to the bill. Then he tore a piece of paper from a scratch-pad and found a pencil. Untying the little knot of silk that held the court-plaster book together, he extracted the pink sheet and laid it on the piece of paper and with the pencil carefully traced the outline of it.

GUARDING HIS GOAL

When that was done he laid the sheet of white plaster in place of the pink, and fitting it to the top and sides of the outline, passed his pencil across the bottom edge. After that he took his scissors and painstakingly cut out the quarter-inch strip remaining between the two bottom marks. As he had expected, the little piece of paper exactly fitted the strip of white court-plaster pasted over the edges of the tear in the dollar bill. There was no possibility of doubt. The two tallied to the hundredth part of an inch.

Toby tied up the court-plaster book again and restored it, with the scissors, to the table drawer. Then, actuated by what motive he scarcely knew, he slipped the bill and the telltale strip of yellow paper into an envelope and placed that in the drawer too. And after that he laced his fingers together behind his head and leaned back and frowned intently at the flickering gas-jet. That dollar bill had come into his possession just after his return from vacation. Who had paid it to him he couldn't recall now. But he remembered perfectly discovering the tear in it and how, fearing it might increase if not mended, he had hit on the, to him, clever idea of patching it with a strip

TOMMY LINGARD EXPLAINS

of court-plaster. It was, he reflected, rather odd that the only two pieces of money in the little box which he could have identified should both have come back to him! He no longer doubted that Frank Lamson had taken the little box and its contents from his bureau drawer, although he could not for the life of him find a satisfactory motive for the theft. Unless, and after all that was the most plausible theory, Frank had been pressed for money and Arnold had mentioned to him that Toby had a fund stowed away to buy hockey things. Wanting a better explanation, that must do, Toby told himself.

The next question was what was to be done about it. Toby's proof, while positive to him, might not seem so to others. If he accused Frank and demanded the restitution of the stolen money Frank would, probably, deny emphatically and indignantly. It would be his word against Frank's, and Frank was fairly well-liked and popular. But then he wouldn't make it public, in any case, and a popular verdict had nothing to do with the affair. What he wanted was only the restoration of his six dollars and a quarter and if Frank refused to give it back to him the matter would have

GUARDING HIS GOAL

to rest right there. Toby had no notion of making the affair known. But, he thought vindictively, whether Frank was willing to restore the money to him or wasn't, he would have the satisfaction of telling Frank what he thought of him! To be able to tell Frank Lamson to his face that he was a thief was almost worth the loss of the money! He planned and replanned what he would say. Even if he didn't intend to make the matter public there'd be no harm in threatening Frank with it. He could scare him, at least. Frank, of course, would bluster and try to laugh at him, but for once that sort of thing wouldn't work. Toby had the upper hand.

There was no studying done in Number 22 Whitson that evening. Nor was Toby disturbed again by visitors. He quite forgot his wish that Arnold would look him up. He forgot Arnold too. His mind was very busy planning how to wreak vengeance on Frank Lamson. He had not realized before to-night how thoroughly he hated that youth!

CHAPTER XIV

A QUESTION OF COLOR

I HAVE already remarked that things look very different in the morning from what they do at night. Toby rolled out of bed some eight hours later with his mind made up to say nothing about the theft to any one, not even to Frank Lamson! Just when this resolve had come to him and by what process of reasoning he didn't know, for he had certainly gone to sleep almost fidgety with the desire for morning and the opportunity to confront Frank with the charge of theft. There is a saying that the night brings counsel. It would be nearer the facts to say that sleep clears the brain. Violent emotions such as anger generate a poison, the scientists tell us, and sleep is one of the antidotes. Toby went to bed with a good deal of poison in his system and woke up quite free from it. He was just a little bit surprised at his change of heart, but he was more glad than surprised. After all, nothing was to be gained by

GUARDING HIS GOAL

making trouble for Frank. Evil-doers suffer eventually, anyway, and there was no reason why Toby should assume the rôle of Retribution. Besides, and I think this had a good deal of weight with him, Arnold liked Frank and believed in him, and Toby, now that he was no longer peeved with Arnold, didn't want to cause him any pain. Six dollars and a quarter was still six dollars and a quarter, just as it had been last night, but it wasn't worth acting the cad for! Business was looking up again, thanks, possibly, to the cut-rates advertised in *The Scholiast*, and it wouldn't be more than a week or so before he would have another six dollars. Meanwhile the purchase of hockey gloves and leg-guards could wait. Oddly enough, he found that his sentiment toward Frank Lamson this morning was far more charitable than it had been a week ago. Dislike was tinctured with pity. As a rival, either in hockey or in the affections of Arnold, Frank seemed much less formidable. So far as he was concerned, Toby decided as he shuffled down the corridor to the bath, the incident was closed.

At breakfast Arnold's manner showed that he had forgotten Toby's aloofness of the evening be-

A QUESTION OF COLOR

fore and when the meal was over they went up to Number 12 and talked until it was time to go to chapel. Of course Arnold wanted to know if Toby had found his money, and was surprised when told that he hadn't. He was so genuinely sorry that Toby secretly called himself a beast for ever doubting Arnold's affection.

"Tell you what I'll do, Toby," said Arnold finally. "I'll strike for an extra ten dollars and loan you six or seven, or whatever you want. I haven't asked for any extra funds for months and months; anyway, not since November. Dad's pretty firm about keeping inside my allowance, but I have a hunch he likes to slip me a little extra now and then if I can give him a decent excuse. Let's see, now, what'll I tell him?"

"Tell him you need a hair-cut," suggested Homer, who had come up a minute before. "That's what I always say."

"Ten dollars for a hair-cut," mused Arnold, "sounds a bit thick, doesn't it? Guess I'll just say that I want to make a loan to a chap. That's a new one and dad may fall for it."

"Thanks, Arn," said Toby, finally defeating the temptation to accept the loan, "but I'd rather

GUARDING HIS GOAL

you didn't. I'll make that money up in a week or so and never know I lost it. The trouble about borrowing," he added wisely, "is that you have to pay up."

"There wouldn't be any hurry about it. You could pay a dollar now and then, whenever you happened to have it. Better let me do it, Toby."

But Toby was firm and Arnold finally gave up the scheme. "Too bad, too," he mourned, "because that was a brand-new and original touch, and I'd like to have seen whether it would work!"

Hockey practice the next afternoon was more than ordinarily strenuous. Mr. Loring, the volunteer coach, was back again after an absence of a few days, and made things hum. A new combination of forwards was tried out against the second, Crowell going from left center to left wing and Jim Rose taking the captain's place. But, although that change lasted until Wednesday, it produced no great improvement, and on Wednesday Crowell and Rose returned to their former positions. Toby had his first real dose of goal-tending that Monday afternoon, taking Frank Lamson's place in the second period. To say that he did better than Frank would be an exaggeration,

A QUESTION OF COLOR

but it's fair to say that he did as well, and, since Frank had made several good stops that afternoon and held the second team to two tallies, saying that speaks well for Toby's progress as a goal-tend. In the last half the second put the puck into the net three times. Simpson, Casement and Fanning had been sent in and the second team found them easier to contend with than the first-choice forwards. During the last five minutes of play Stillwell took Halliday's place at cover point, and it was during Stillwell's incumbency that the second scored that third goal. Stillwell took the wrong man, and Fraser, at point, allowed himself to be drawn too far out. A quick and clever pass in front of goal gave a second team forward a pretty chance for a score and, although Toby partly stopped the lifted puck with his hand, it dropped to the ice just inside the cage. Toby felt badly about that tally, but no one else seemed to. The first had a four point lead and another tally for the opponent mattered little. But after practice was over Coach Loring stopped Toby at the bench as he was pulling his coat on.

"Let me see those gloves you're wearing, Tucker," said Mr. Loring.

GUARDING HIS GOAL

Toby exhibited them and the coach sniffed his contempt. "No wonder that shot got by you," he said. "Doesn't it hurt to stop the puck with those things?"

"Er — yes, sir, sometimes it does."

"So I'd think. Why, those aren't padded at all, Tucker! Where'd you get them? Haven't you any others?"

"No, sir, I haven't any others. These are some I had. I — I've been thinking of getting some heavier ones —"

"You'd better do it, my boy. Get a good pair of goal-tender's gloves and throw those away. Those aren't thick enough to keep your hands warm, and you might very easily get a shot that would break a bone. Can you buy gloves in Greenburg now? You couldn't when I was here."

"Yes, sir, they have them at Fessenden's."

"Better attend to getting them before you play again. If you'd had a heavy pair on to-day you could have stopped that last shot and saved your team a goal, couldn't you?"

"I think so. It — it was pretty hard."

Toby had donned his coat and they were fol-

A QUESTION OF COLOR

lowing in the wake of the others up the boardwalk to the gymnasium. Toby didn't know whether to try to fall behind or hurry ahead. It was scarcely conceivable that the coach wanted his company all the way up the hill! But Mr. Loring settled the matter himself just then.

"How long have you been playing goal, Tucker?" he asked.

"About three weeks, sir."

"Where'd you play before that? Point, I suppose."

"Yes, sir, a few days."

"Were you with the second last year? I don't seem to remember you."

"No, sir, I wasn't here last year."

"Oh, that's it? But you played somewhere else, I suppose."

"No, I never played until last month, Mr. Loring."

The coach looked surprised. "Never played hockey at all? Well, but — you don't want me to believe that you've learned all you know about playing goal in a month, Tucker?"

"Yes, sir, but I'm afraid I don't know very much," responded Toby apologetically.

GUARDING HIS GOAL

"Hm, I don't know. I've seen worse playing. When you learn to move a little bit quicker you ought to do pretty well." The coach turned and surveyed Toby speculatively. "Pull that cap off a minute."

Toby obeyed, wonderingly.

"Thought so! It's red, isn't it?"

Toby flushed and swallowed hard. Then: "Brown, sir," he answered firmly. The coach laughed.

"Brown, is it? All right, Tucker, my mistake. I'm sorry."

"It's all right," murmured Toby, forgivingly.

"Oh, I wasn't apologizing," retorted the coach, dryly. "I meant that I was sorry it wasn't red. You see, Tucker, I have a theory that a goal-tend ought to have red hair."

Toby looked his surprise. "Why, sir?" he asked.

"Because, Tucker, it has been my experience that fellows with red hair are fighters. When I played football I always looked the other team over for red-heads and if I saw one I kept close tabs on him. I don't think I ever saw one yet that didn't bear a lot of watching. Now you know

A QUESTION OF COLOR

why I'm a little disappointed in your case. Just at first, when you took your cap off, I thought there was a reddish tinge to your hair. Probably it was due to the sunset or the reflection from the snow or something."

There wasn't any sunset, or, if there was, it wasn't visible, and it was so nearly twilight that to talk of reflection from the snow was nonsense. Toby glanced at the coach suspiciously, but Mr. Loring's face looked quite guileless.

"It's always been a sorrow in my young life," went on the coach meaningfully, "that I didn't have red hair. I'd have done a heap better at everything, I guess."

"You — you're fooling, aren't you, sir?" asked Toby.

"Fooling? Nary a fool, Tucker. Red hair is the hall mark of getthereness, Tucker. It means pep and fight and determination, red hair does. Sometimes it means temper, too, but temper is all right if you learn to control it. And sometimes —" he paused a moment — "sometimes it means stubbornness. But stubbornness is all right, too, if exercised in a good cause. Of course, when a fellow says that black is white, when he knows it

GUARDING HIS GOAL

isn't, and sticks to it, or insists that red is — ah — brown — ”

Toby burst out laughing and Mr. Loring turned and regarded him smilingly, his thoughtful solemnity gone.

“ It — it's a little red, sir,” gasped Toby.

“ I thought it couldn't be all due to the sunset,” responded the coach with a chuckle. “ Well, here we are.” They stopped at the gymnasium steps. “ Where do you room, Tucker?”

“ In Whitson, sir. Number 22.”

“ That's on the third floor, isn't it? Mind if I look in on you some time? I haven't really finished my little lecture on red hair.”

“ No, sir, only — ”

“ Only what? You mean you're busy and have no time for callers? ”

“ No, sir,” floundered Toby. “ I mean — I was afraid — you see, my room isn't very — very comfortable — ”

“ Oh, that's it? Well, you've got a chair, I dare say.”

“ Two of them,” answered Toby.

“ Fine! Going to be in this evening? ”

“ Yes, sir.”

A QUESTION OF COLOR

"I'll be up for a few minutes, then, between nine and ten. Better get inside quickly, Tucker, or you'll get stiff."

Toby hurried up the steps and through the door, excited and elated. Maybe, he was thinking, Coach Loring would tell him how to better his goal work. Toby had heard that Mr. Loring had been a fine hockey player in his day and had captained his team here at Yardley. He wondered if, by any chance, he had played goal. He would ask some one. But in the locker room the idea was put out of his head for the time, for just inside the swinging doors he almost collided with Frank Lamson. It was the first time they had been near enough to exchange words since the night they had met in the upper corridor of Whitson. If Toby expected to detect signs of guilt in Frank's countenance he was doomed to disappointment. Frank only smiled in his careless, somewhat patronizing manner and asked:

"Did you get that money from Arn, Tucker? Sorry to be slow about it." He didn't sound very sorry, or look especially penitent, and a few days ago Toby would have resented the fact. To-day, for some reason, he didn't, however. Frank

GUARDING HIS GOAL

seemed much less important than before, much less capable of irritating the other. Toby nodded.

"Yes, thanks," he said.

"All right. Well, you and I seem to be rivals, old scout, eh?"

"How is that?" asked Toby, although he knew what Frank meant.

"Why, for goal, you know. I'll have to keep an eye on you, Toby. You didn't do so rottenly to-day, what? Speed it up a bit, my boy, and you'll get there yet. Heard anything more about Henry's coming back?"

"No, I haven't," answered Toby carelessly.

"You don't seem to care, either. Well, it mightn't make much difference to you. By the way, are those cut-rate prices still on? I've got a suit that wouldn't be any worse for cleaning. I'll fetch it up some day soon."

Toby was glad when Frank let him go, for the temptation to hold out his hand and say "I'd like my six dollars and a quarter, please!" was strong. And, besides, Toby felt oddly uncomfortable in Frank's society, knowing what he did. Afterwards it occurred to him that Frank had seemed absolutely at ease, and that puzzled him. "Of

A QUESTION OF COLOR

course, he doesn't suspect that I know," argued Toby, "but, still, you'd think he'd be a bit ashamed of himself and want to keep out of my way. Why, he's more — more friendly since he stole my money than he was before! "

CHAPTER XV

TOBY ENTERTAINS

TOBY had the little room under the roof of Whitson well tidied up by eight o'clock. It still looked far from luxurious, but at least it was clean. There was a faint odor of benzine to be detected, but there was always that, and no amount of airing seemed to entirely banish it. Toby sat down to study at a little after eight, but for the first half-hour he was continually peering around in dubious appraisal of his efforts or pushing back his chair and arising to turn the arm-chair a little more to the left, at which angle its dilapidated seat was more in shadow, or wedge the sagging door of the wardrobe more firmly shut or work some similar improvement. After he finally did become absorbed in study it seemed only a few minutes before nine o'clock struck.

Mr. Loring was very prompt, for Toby had only time to rearrange the few articles on the top of the bureau for the fifth or sixth time when his

TOBY ENTERTAINS

knock came at the door. Alfred Loring was twenty-five or -six years of age and of medium height. His brown eyes had a disconcerting fashion of twinkling merrily even when the other features of a good-looking face proclaimed gravity, as though life was much more of a joke than he wanted you to know. When Toby had somewhat embarrassedly conducted him to the seat of honor and subsided into the straight chair by the table, the visitor opened the conversation in a most unexpected way.

"This where you do your tailoring, Tucker?" he asked.

"Y-yes, sir," Toby stammered. He had tried so hard to hide every trace of that occupation, too! The gas-stove, its six feet of tubing wound around it, reposed under the bed and the irons and other things were in the bottom of the wardrobe. He wondered how Mr. Loring knew about it, not surmising that the coach had naturally enough sought to learn all he could of Toby before his visit. "I don't do any tailoring," corrected Toby. "I just clean clothes and press them."

"Get much to do?"

GUARDING HIS GOAL

"Lots sometimes, sir. In winter I don't get so much. Fellows don't seem to mess their things up in winter. They wear sweaters and old trousers a good deal."

"So you try to liven trade by offering special inducements? I see. Well, that shows you have a business head, Tucker."

Evidently Mr. Loring had seen *The Scholiast*. Toby hadn't thought of that likelihood. Of course, he wasn't ashamed of cleaning clothes, but Mr. Loring was such a correct, immaculately-at-tired gentleman — what Toby a year ago would have called a "dude" — that he might lose interest in a fellow who had to perform such labor to eke out his expenses. Toby viewed Mr. Loring doubtfully and was silent.

"When I was here there was a fellow named Middlebury who used to make rather a good thing of darning socks. He was a wonder at it. I've never seen a woman do it better, by Jove! Charged two cents a pair, I think it was, and was as busy as a hen. Nice chap, Middlebury was. Honor Man two years and rowed on the crew. There isn't much a fellow can do here, though, to earn money, and you were clever to think of the

TOBY ENTERTAINS

cleaning and pressing business. At college it's rather different. All sorts of things there for a chap; waiting on table, looking after furnaces and shoveling snow and cutting grass, taking subscriptions, selling things — no end to them." Coach Loring looked around the little room, but not at all critically. "I don't believe I was ever in this room, all the time I was at school here."

"Where did you room, sir?" asked Toby.

"Clarke first, and then Dudley. I remember young Thompson roomed on the floor below. Number 20, I think it was. I wonder what became of Arthur. Funny how you lose track of fellows after you get away. They don't provide you with many luxuries up here, Tucker."

"No, sir, but the rent isn't very much, you see."

"This is your first year, you said, didn't you? Second class?"

"Third, sir. Maybe I ought to be in the second. I'm nearly sixteen —"

"You look fully that. I wouldn't worry. I didn't get out of here until I was eighteen, and I've never regretted it. What do you do besides hockey, Tucker? Go in for football any?"

"I tried for the second last Fall, but I didn't

GUARDING HIS GOAL

make it. They said I was too light, but I guess it was because I didn't play well enough."

Mr. Loring laughed. "You seem honest with yourself, my boy! Now, about hockey. Like it, do you?"

"Very much, sir."

"Did you want to play goal or did some one just put you there?"

"I was put," answered Toby, smiling. "I didn't know much about it when I started to play. I tried being a forward, but I couldn't seem to get the hang of it. I don't—don't skate very fancy."

"Well, I don't remember that I did," was the reply. "But I managed to get around pretty well and they made me captain finally. So that needn't bother you, Tucker."

"Did you play goal, sir?"

"Point. Vinton was goal then. And—let me see—Felder was cover point. And then there was Roeder and Durfee and Pennimore—It was Gerald Pennimore who gave the cup we play Broadwood for every year. Or, rather, it was Gerald's father."

"The Pennimore Cup? I've seen some of

TOBY ENTERTAINS

them in the Trophy Room in the gym. Did you beat Broadwood when you were captain, Mr. Loring?"

"I think so. By Jove, I don't remember now! Hold on, though! Yes, we did win. It was Gerald's shot in the last minute or so that gave us the game. We lost the year before that, though, I believe." He shook his head, smiling whimsically. "It used to be all terribly important then, Tucker, but it doesn't seem now to have mattered much who won! Only three years ago I wanted to drown myself because the football team I captained was beaten in its big game. I don't believe any fellow was ever much more unhappy. I thought the world had dropped into space or the sky fallen in or something. It's a wonderful thing to be young, Tucker, and have enthusiasm. Take my advice, my boy, and get all the honest fun out of life you can. First thing you know you're twenty-five years old and you've reached that awful stage when you'd rather sit in front of a fire than put on spikes and run three miles through a snow-storm for the honor of Yardley! Well, this isn't hockey, is it? Do you care enough about the game, Tucker, to take a lot of trouble and work

GUARDING HIS GOAL

hard and be a real, genuine, rattling good goal-keeper?"

"Yes, sir," answered Toby earnestly and eagerly.

"Well, I think you could be if you tried real hard. I like your style. You remind me of old Dan Vinton. He used to stand up there in the same cool, quiet way. Looked as if nothing mattered a bit to him, but I've seen him stop two pucks at the same time in practice. Coolness is what counts, Tucker, that and keeping your two eyes glued right to the puck every moment."

"Yes, sir, and after that?"

"Nothing after that but just practice. Get in front of your net and let some one hammer away at you, some one who can serve them all styles, high, low and every other way, and see how many you can stop. Take a half an hour of that every day, Tucker. Have you a spare hour in the morning?"

"Yes, sir," replied Toby dubiously, "but I'm afraid I don't know any one who'd be willing to do that."

"I'll find you some one, then. A half-hour of shooting wouldn't do any one of those forwards

TOBY ENTERTAINS

a bit of harm," added Coach Loring dryly. "Another thing is this, Tucker. Study the man who's making the shot. See how he's going to do it. Watch his stick. See whether he's going to scoop the puck at you or lift it. Learn to guess beforehand where the puck is coming and how it's coming. And don't depend on your hands to stop it. Sometimes a hand's all right, but your body's the surest thing. Learn to be quick in getting from one side of the cage to the other. Don't have your skates too sharp, because you want to use them quickly. You ought to follow that puck every second, even if it's down at the other goal. Get in the habit of watching it. And never rely on some one else to make the stop. You may think that your cover point or your point is going to do it, but don't take it for granted. Always be ready in case he fails. If the opponent with the puck gets by your outer defense don't get rattled. Just remember and tell yourself that the opponent is every bit as anxious as you are. If you're nervous, he's more so. Keep steady, get ready and watch! Half the time he will shoot badly just because so much depends on his shooting well. It seems in hockey that the better your chance the

GUARDING HIS GOAL

poorer your shot. Don't let any one draw you out from goal, Tucker, ever. It's a good plan to go out once in a blue moon, maybe, but do it when the other fellow isn't expecting you to. Don't let him plan it. If the man with the puck is past your point and there's no one near to engage him, it's sometimes a mighty good play to rush out on him. But do it before he can get the puck away and keep your body between the puck and the net. Vinton had a way of sliding out sort of crouched down and with his arms out. He looked like an angry hen, but he used to spoil many a shot that way. There, that's all I know about playing goal, Tucker, and maybe some of it isn't right!" Mr. Loring ended with a laugh.

"I'm awfully much obliged to you," said Toby earnestly. "And I'd like mighty well to have some one shoot for me every day, sir. Only I don't know many fellows very well. Deering has a recitation when I'm free and so he couldn't do it, you see."

"I'll find some one. What time in the morning could you be at the rink?"

"Between eleven and twelve, sir."

"All right. You be ready for the day after to-

TOBY ENTERTAINS

morrow," was the reply. "If I can't find any one else I'll have a go at it myself. Good-night, Tucker." Mr. Loring held out his hand. "I hope I haven't bored you with my chatter."

"Oh, no, sir! Why, I — I've had a — a fine time, sir!"

"Have you? Good stuff! Now don't forget my boy, that you're to work hard. I'm going to help you. We all will. I want to see you in front of that net three weeks from next Saturday."

"That — that's the Broadwood game, sir, isn't it?"

"Yes. Does that scare you?"

"No, sir, it doesn't scare me, but I'm afraid I won't be good enough."

"In three weeks, my boy, if you buckle down to it you'll be quite good enough. At least, you'll be as good or better than any other goal that's in sight now. If Henry comes back in time —"

"Yes, sir, I know," murmured Toby.

"Know what?"

"That he will play goal if he gets off probation."

"Hm; well, if he does it will be your fault, Tucker."

GUARDING HIS GOAL

"My fault, sir? You mean that — that —"

"I mean that if you get along the way I expect you to it won't matter a mite to us whether Henry gets back or not! You tell yourself every day, Tucker, that you are going to make a better goal-tend than Henry or Lamson. Then prove you're right. Good-night!"

After the door had closed behind his visitor Toby did a most undignified thing. He took a run across the worn old carpet and plunged headfirst onto the bed. It was certainly taking chances, but the bed, although it rattled and groaned and creaked in all its joints, withstood the assault. After that Toby wriggled his feet to the floor, sat up on the side of the cot and, with hands plunged deep into his pockets and gaze fixed on the opposite wall, muttered "*Gee!*" ecstatically. And after a moment he said it again: "*Gee!*" Just like that.

CHAPTER XVI

ABSENT FROM CHAPEL

THERE was no opportunity to tell Arnold of the wonderful news until the next morning after breakfast. Then he pulled his chum upstairs to Number 12 and recounted the whole stupendous happening to him. Arnold was delighted, but not as delighted as Toby thought he should have been. And the reason appeared a minute later when Arnold said doubtfully:

"I think myself you've got the making of a mighty good goal, T. Tucker, only it seems to me you'll need a good deal more practice than you can get this year. I wouldn't be too set up over what Loring says. Of course he was right about your being a good one and all that, but Loring is sort of — of visionary, I guess. I mean —"

"I don't think he's visionary at all," replied Toby indignantly. "He talks mighty practical

GUARDING HIS GOAL

horse-sense, Arn. How do you mean, visionary?"

"Well, he's great for what he calls 'tactical playing': believes in planning everything out beforehand and all that. Any one knows that you can't plan a hockey game, because you can't tell beforehand what's going to develop. Frank says, too, that Loring wasn't much of a player when he was in college. He never made the varsity seven, anyway. He was just substitute one year, or maybe two."

"He was football captain, though," defended Toby.

"I know that, but being football captain doesn't make you a good hockey coach, does it?"

"Maybe he was too busy to make the hockey team. If a fellow is captain of the football team he wouldn't have much time for other things, it seems to me. And he was captain of his hockey team here at Yardley, because he told me so."

"Oh, well, they didn't play hockey then as they do now. The game's just about twice as far advanced as it was then. I guess that's the trouble with Loring. He's still trying to teach the old-style game. Frank says —"

ABSENT FROM CHAPEL

"What the dickens does Frank know about it?" asked Toby, a trifle impatiently.

"Well, he knows more about it than you do, doesn't he? Anyway, all I'm trying to tell you is that Loring may have promised more than — than he can deliver. When he tells you that by practicing hard and all that you can make yourself a better goal-tend than Henry he's stretching things a bit. He wanted to say something nice, I guess. Or maybe he wanted to make you work harder. Frank says Loring wasn't asked up here to coach the seven this year. He just came. He coached last year and we got licked to a frazzle. Crowell wanted some one else, but there didn't seem to be any one, and Loring offered to come —"

"I think he's a mighty good coach," said Toby warmly, "no matter what Frank Lamson or any other fellow says. And I don't see that Frank is in position to know more about it than I am, for that matter, Arn."

"You won't deny that he's had more hockey experience, I suppose?"

"No, but —" Toby stopped. He had almost said that Frank's experiences hadn't done

GUARDING HIS GOAL

him an awful lot of good. Instead; "But I don't think that having played last year makes a — a critic of him. Maybe it wasn't Mr. Loring's fault that we lost to Broadwood last year. A coach can't turn out a winning team unless he has the material."

"Our material was all right. It was just as good as this year's, every bit. Loring's a back-number, that's all. Frank was saying the other day that if Crowell had got hold —"

"Oh, bother what Frank says!" interrupted Toby, peevishly. "You make me tired, always quoting Frank Lamson, Arn. You'd think he was the only fellow in school! He isn't any better judge of Mr. Loring's coaching than you or me."

Arnold flushed. "How long," he asked, "since you sat yourself up as a hockey authority?"

"I don't. But I know as much hockey as Frank Lamson does right this minute, even if he has played the game longer."

"Yes, you do! You're getting a swelled head, Toby, that's the matter with you. You think that just because Loring patted you on the head and told you you were a great little goal-tend that you

ABSENT FROM CHAPEL

know it all. When fellows who have played the game for years say that Loring's no good as a coach — ”

“ No one does say so but Lamson! And what he says is piffle. And you can tell him I said so, if you like! ”

“ It wouldn't bother him a bit,” answered Arnold angrily. “ But if you can't speak decently of folks you'd better keep your mouth shut, Toby. Frank's a friend of mine, and a friend of yours, too, and — ”

Toby laughed loudly. “ A friend of mine, is he? That's a good one! ”

“ He certainly is! Has he ever done anything that wasn't friendly? ”

“ Has he ever done anything that was? ”

“ Lots! ”

“ Piffle! ”

“ Oh, all right. Have it your way, Mr. Smart Aleck! Frank — ”

“ You ask Frank Lamson if he was a friend of mine last Friday night,” challenged Toby hotly. “ If I had half a dozen friends like him I'd be — be in the poor house! ”

“ What do you mean by that? What did

GUARDING HIS GOAL

Frank do? Go on and tell me now! You've hinted. Out with it."

But Toby, suddenly sobered, shook his head. "Never mind," he muttered. "Ask him if you want to know. I guess he wouldn't tell, though." He laughed mirthlessly.

"That's a cowardly trick," said Arnold in disgust. "You make an accusation against a fellow and then refuse to follow it up. Whether Frank is a friend of yours or not, you certainly aren't a friend to him. And you aren't a friend to me, either, when you talk like that. If you weren't a cad you'd come out and say what you mean."

"Ask him," said Toby doggedly.

"I will ask him!" blazed Arnold. "And if I was Frank I'd — I'd —"

"What?" demanded Toby. "Come back and steal my clothes this time, I suppose! You tell him I'm putting my money in the bank now where he can't get it!"

"What! Look here, Toby Tucker, do you mean to tell me that you're accusing Frank of stealing that money of yours? Are you plumb crazy?"

"No, it's you who are crazy! You think so

ABSENT FROM CHAPEL

much of Frank that you believe anything he tells you. He couldn't do anything wrong, according to your idea. Well, ask him where he got the quarter with the initials cut in it! And ask him where he got the dollar bill with the court-plaster on it! He thinks, because I haven't said anything, that I don't know. Well, I do know. I've got all the proof I need, and if I told fellows what I know — ”

“ Look here, Toby! ” cried Arnold sternly.
“ Cut that out! ”

“ Oh, of course! Anything that Lamson does — ”

“ Leave Frank alone! Look after your own — your own conduct! Accusing a fellow like Frank of stealing! I never heard anything so rotten! Or so silly, either! Cut it out, I tell you! ”

“ Sure! Maybe you'd like me to send him a pocket-book to keep it in? He swiped my money and I'm not to speak of it for fear I might hurt his feelings! ” Toby laughed shrilly. “ That's a good one! ”

Arnold strode to the door, with blazing eyes, and threw it wide open. “ Get out of here,

GUARDING HIS GOAL

Toby," he demanded, " and stay out until you can talk decently of my friends. You needn't come back until you apologize. I mean it!"

Toby's heart sank for an instant, but a smarting sense of injury forced a laugh and a sneer to his lips. "One excuse is as good as another to get rid of me, Arn. I've known all along that you were — were tired of me. Frank Lamson —"

"Let Frank alone! I've told you once! Get out or I'll put you out!"

"Try it!" dared Toby. "I wish you would!" Then, as Arnold only stood motionless with his hand on the door-knob, Toby shrugged his shoulders and walked past him. On the threshold he paused for a final fling. "I'm glad to go," he said hotly. "I don't care to stay where I'm not wanted. But if you wait for me to apologize you'll wait until your hair's gray, Arnold Deering. And, considering the way you love him and stand up for him, I think the least Lamson can do is to divvy up with you on that money he stole. Or perhaps he has already?"

The door, with Arnold's weight against it, thrust Toby into the corridor and closed with a crash. Toby laughed ironically and, his head

ABSENT FROM CHAPEL

high and a disk of red in each cheek, climbed the stairs to the hall above. In his room, he moved about for several minutes, picking things up and laying them down again quite unconsciously. He whistled a gay little tune until he suddenly found himself seated in a chair with his hands in his trousers pockets, his legs sprawled out before him and a horrible sinking feeling inside him. The whistle had stopped and he was staring miserably at the tops of the bare trees outside the window. He was sorry.

Being sorry is a most absorbing occupation. A fellow can spend heaps of time being sorry and never realize it. And that's just what Toby did. How long he sat there, sprawled disconsolately in the chair, alternately blaming himself for what had happened and then Arnold, hating Frank with a new and perfectly soul-filling hatred, I don't know. But I do know that when a sense of the passage of time edged in past the varied and warring emotions and he looked at the tin clock on the bureau it was exactly eight minutes to nine and he had missed chapel!

To miss chapel without a good and sufficient excuse was a bad piece of business for a scholarship

GUARDING HIS GOAL

student, and the fact drove all thought of Frank and Arnold and the quarrel from his mind. There was a bare chance, one chance in ten, perhaps, that his absence wouldn't be discovered, but dare he risk it? At Yardley you were put on your honor as regarded attendance at chapel. Should you stay away you were expected to report the fact to the office and tender an explanation. But, thought Toby, what explanation could he offer? Doctor Collins would scarcely accept the true one as sufficient, and, if it came to concocting a lie, why he might just as well say nothing and trust to luck. Failure to report his absence would be no more dishonorable than lying about it! Toby studied the quandary troubledly for a good ten minutes. Then he pulled his cap on, thrust his hands determinedly into his pockets and made straight for the Office.

Chapel was over by the time he entered Oxford and the fellows were streaming down the stairs. Toby turned to the right and strode valiantly along the corridor and opened the door with the ground-glass panel and the inscription in formidable black lettering: "Office of the Principal." The outer office was a big, strongly-lighted room

ABSENT FROM CHAPEL

with its walls hidden by shelves and filing cabinets. A heavy carpet covered the floor and at each end of the room a big broad-topped desk stood. One of these was presided over by the school secretary. He glanced up perfunctorily as Toby closed the door behind him and nodded to a chair. Toby sat down and waited. From a further room marked "Private" came the sound of low voices. The secretary's pen scratched on and on in the silence. The outer door opened again and a small boy with a scared countenance entered, was challenged by the secretary's glance and settled down into the chair next to Toby, trying his best to assume an appearance of nonchalance. Toby wondered if he too had cut chapel. Presently the secretary plunged his pen into a bowl of shot and looked toward Toby.

"Well, sir?"

"I want to see Doctor Collins, please."

"Summons?"

"Sir?"

"Are you summoned?"

"No, sir, not yet. I mean—" Toby floundered. The ghost of a smile crossed the secretary's face.

GUARDING HIS GOAL

"What do you wish to see him about, please?"

"I missed chapel this morning, sir, and —"

"Oh! What's the name?"

"Tucker, Third Class."

"Excuse?" The secretary had drawn a slip of paper to him and recovered his pen.

"I — I forgot, sir," answered Toby, lamely.

The secretary's eye-brows arched. "That's a novel excuse, Tucker," he said dryly. He pulled out a drawer at his right, ran his fingers over the card index there and finally paused. "Tobias Tucker?"

"Yes, sir."

"You hold a Ripley Scholarship, I believe?"

"Yes, sir."

The secretary's pen moved leisurely across the slip of paper.

"That's the best excuse you can offer, is it?" he asked, without looking up.

"I was — was upset by something," answered Toby, struggling to make a good case for himself of very poor material. "I didn't know it was so late, sir. When I found out what time it was it was eight minutes to nine. I'm sorry."

"Hm, being sorry is of so very little use,

ABSENT FROM CHAPEL

Tucker. Ever think of that? After this, I'd advise you to do your being sorry beforehand. It saves a lot of trouble sometimes. That's all. You'll hear from the Office in due time."

"I couldn't see Doctor Collins, sir?" asked Toby wistfully.

"The Principal does not see students without appointments until after two o'clock, Tucker. You can see him then if you like, but frankly I don't think it would do you any good. If he wants to see you he will let you know."

"Yes, sir." Toby went out. After all, he told himself outside, scowling challengingly at one of the plaster statues that loomed ghost-like along the corridor, he had done what was honorable. He found a trifle of consolation in that. Whatever was to be, was to be, and there was nothing more he could do in the matter. His record until to-day had been good and he didn't believe that faculty would deprive him of that scholarship for just missing one chapel. He was fairly cheerful by the time he entered Whitson again and if luck hadn't ordained that he should almost collide with Arnold at the top of the first flight he might have kept right on feeling cheerful for awhile longer.

GUARDING HIS GOAL

But sight of Arnold brought back recollection of that other trouble. Arnold drew aside, in stony silence, and Toby, after one startled glance, stepped aside and passed. Homer Wilkins, behind Arnold, said: "Hello, Toby! What's the rush?" But Toby made no answer and went on up the next flight, oppressed by a queer, empty sort of feeling. There was nothing to do until nine-thirty, unless he chose to rub up his algebra a little or press the trousers that Will Curran had left during his absence. Toby didn't feel like studying, though, and, after reading the note that Curran had pinned to the garment, he only crumpled it up and tossed it in the waste basket and laid the trousers down again. At another time Curran's facetious communication would have won a smile, but to-day it seemed sadly dreary.

Curran had written:

"Tucker's Cleansing and Pressing Parlors,
Dear Sir:

Please heat your little iron
And press these trousers nice.
I'll call for them this evening
And bring the stated price.
Don't crease them much above the knees,

ABSENT FROM CHAPEL

For that's against the style,
But press the cuffs down very flat,
So they will stay awhile.

William Shakespeare Curran."

Awful rot, Toby thought.

CHAPTER XVII

THE GRAY CARD

THREE was no summons from the Office that day, and Toby began to take hope.

By evening he was in quite an equable state of mind, thanks, perhaps, to an hour and a half of hard work on the rink. There's nothing much better than outdoor exercise to restore a fellow's mind to a normal condition. And for one twenty-minute period Toby had played goal against the second seven and for an hour before that had taken part in a hard, brisk practice, his visit to the bench having been of a scant ten-minute duration. Animated by the desperate resolve to wreak vengeance on Frank Lamson by beating him out for the position of first choice goal, Toby had worked harder than he ever had before, with the result that his playing had been almost of the spectacular kind during the time he had guarded the first team's goal. Henry, who had been at the rink looking on a bit disconsolately, had told him

THE GRAY CARD

afterwards, enthusiasm struggling against depression, that he had "knocked them down in great shape, Tucker, my lad, and no bally mistake about it!" And Toby had gone back to the gymnasium feeling a bit proud of himself and hugging the thought that revenge against Frank Lamson was certain and overwhelming. And then, in the upper hall, he had run plumb against Frank!

That Arnold had said nothing to Frank of Toby's accusation was at once evident, for Frank hailed the younger boy almost cordially. "Great stuff, Toby!" he said. "You and I are going to have a real race, eh? By gosh, old scout, I didn't know you had it in you!" The accompanying laugh suggested, however, that he was not seriously disturbed. Toby colored, momentarily embarrassed. The last thing he wanted from Frank was congratulation!

"Thanks," he said stiffly. "Glad you like it."

"Well, don't get grouchy about it!" exclaimed Frank. "Any one would think I'd insulted you. Go to the dickens, will you?"

Toby passed him without response, trying hard to look haughty and dignified. That he wasn't particularly successful in his effort was suggested

GUARDING HIS GOAL

by Frank's amused laugh behind him. Later, on his way to the showers, Toby encountered Arnold. It seemed, he thought as he pulled the curtain across and turned the cold water on with more than usual disregard of results, that he was always running into Arn! After he had recovered from the first breath-taking shock of the shower he grumbled: "And he looks like he thought I was a worm, too, confound him! Any one would suppose that it was my fault! I had a perfect right to tell the truth about Frank. He did steal that money from me, and Arn's saying he didn't doesn't alter the fact a bit. Maybe when he finds that Frank isn't the fine hero he thinks he is he'll come off his high horse. But he needn't think I'm going to crawl, for I'm not. If he waits for me to apologize he will wait a mighty long while!"

Coach Loring came to him while he was dressing. "Beech is going to practice with you in the morning, Tucker," he said. "At eleven. He will tell you what days he's free. Let me know when he can't be there and I'll arrange with some one else — or do it myself. I noticed you used your body more to-day in stopping shots. It's the best plan. Keep it up, Tucker."

THE GRAY CARD

But in spite of all this encouragement Toby wasn't really happy that evening. Supper had been a trying affair. Of course neither he nor Arnold had even so much as glanced at each other, much less spoken, and he was conscious all during the meal of the amused or inquiring glances of the other occupants of Table 14. He wondered whether he could get himself moved to another table, but abandoned the idea the next moment. He had done nothing and wasn't going to run away as though he had. If Arnold didn't like eating with him, why, let Arnold move. He put in an hour of study and then pressed Will Curran's trousers, and a suit belonging to another boy, and tried very hard to concoct a rhymed reply to Curran's missive. But rhyming was not Toby's forte and he gave it up finally and climbed into bed to lie awake a long while in the darkness, thinking rather unhappy thoughts about life.

Grover Beech was awaiting him at the rink the next morning at a few minutes past eleven and, after they had shooed a half-dozen preparatory class boys from the ice, they set to work. Toby liked the long and lank second team captain and his respect for the latter's skating and shooting

GUARDING HIS GOAL

prowess increased remarkably during that fifty minutes of work.

"I don't know just what the silly idea is," Beech remarked as he dropped the puck and circled back toward the middle of the rink with it, "but here goes, Tucker!" Beech tore down toward goal, zig-zagging, playing the puck first on one side and then on the other, dug his skates when a few yards away, swept past and, at the last moment, flicked the disk cunningly past Toby's skates. Toby fished it out of the net ruefully, and Beech laughed.

"Keep your eyes open, Tucker!" he called, skating backward and dragging the puck in the crook of his blade. "Loring says he wants you to have practice, son, and I mean to give it to you. So watch your eye, boy!"

"Let her come!" laughed Toby.

And come she did, a long shot that skimmed through the air a foot above the ice and made straight for the center of the net. Toby silently applauded that shot even as he bent and brought his leg-guards together. There was a *thud* and the disk bounded yards away. Beech, who had followed it up, tried to snap it in, but he was skating too fast and the puck struck the side post.



"LET HER COME!" LAUGHED TOBY

THE GRAY CARD

"Good stop," he applauded. "Thought I had you then."

"It was a peach of a shot," called Toby. "Give me some more like that, will you? Those are the sort I want to learn to stop."

Beech obliged, but lift shots weren't successful for him, and presently he went back to his first style, that of skating in close to goal and snapping the puck so quickly to one side or the other that it was difficult for Toby to move fast enough to block it. Once, being caught too far to one side of the cage, he tried to stop the puck with his stick blade and learned a lesson. For the puck jumped over the blade and rolled to the back of the net. Three times out of a dozen or so shots, Beech tallied in that fashion. Then Toby worked out the solution. The next time, when Beech came swinging up — he could shoot almost as well left-handed as right — Toby dashed out to meet him, a proceeding so unexpected to Beech that he almost forgot to shoot. When he did the puck bounded off Toby's knee and skimmed off to the side of the rink.

"Huh!" grunted Beech. "I wondered how long you'd let me do that. Just the same, you

GUARDING HIS GOAL

don't want to try that trick very often, Tucker, or you'll come to grief. If there'd been some one with me I'd simply have passed, you see."

They stopped a minute and talked that over. Beech seemed to have a good deal of hockey sense, Toby thought, and the older boy decided that young Tucker was a pretty brainy lad. Toward the last of the practice Mr. Loring appeared and watched interestedly.

"Beech," he said finally, "take some shots from about five yards away, please. You don't need to skate. Work right around in a half-circle shooting from the different angles. Let's see what Tucker's weakest point is."

It developed that Toby's principal weakness was in meeting shots made from that arc of the circle lying to his left. In other words, as Mr. Loring pointed out, an opposing right wing would stand a better chance of scoring through Toby than a left wing would. "You're right-handed, Tucker," he said. "You can't afford to be. Learn to use your left hand and the left side generally as easily and quickly as your right. Try it again, Beech." And then, after Toby had stopped the puck none too cleverly, he followed

THE GRAY CARD

with: "See what I mean, Tucker? When the puck comes at you from your right or from the center you meet it nicely, but when it comes to you from where Beech is shooting you have trouble. You don't cross as naturally from right to left as you do vice versa and you don't handle your body as well. To-morrow you'd better pay a good deal of attention to shots from that side. Practice swinging across from the right post to the left. If you keep your knee against the post and push out with it when you want to cross you'll get a quicker start. Try it now. That's pretty good. But you favor your right too much. A good goal-tend mustn't know one side from the other. It wouldn't take long for an enemy to discover your weakness, Tucker, and they'd pound you from the right — that is, your left — till the cows come home. Look here, what about those gloves? Didn't you say you were going to get some decent ones?"

"Yes, sir, but I — I haven't had time yet."

"Well, get at it, man! Those things aren't fit to wear. Your fingers would freeze numb on a cold day. Better attend to it to-day if you can. It's five minutes to twelve, fellows. You'd better

GUARDING HIS GOAL

stop now. Can you come again to-morrow, Beech?"

"Yes, sir, to-morrow and Thursday, but not Friday; nor Saturday either."

"Never mind about Saturday. We'll leave Saturday out. I'll take your place Friday, unless I have to run back to New York that day. What I want to do, Beech, is to make a real corking goal out of Tucker. He's got a sort of natural style of playing it that looks good to me. Notice it?"

"I don't know, Mr. Loring," responded Beech doubtfully. "But I know that Tucker can certainly stop them in good style. He's had me skating my head off, sir, before you came."

"Stopping them when there's only one man against you isn't so hard," said Toby, tugging at the straps of his leg-guards. "It's when three or four are skating down on you that the trouble begins!"

"Only one of the four can shoot, Tucker. Remember that. Keep your eye glued to the puck, my boy, and it won't make much difference if there are twenty at you. It's the last man who counts."

They walked back to the gymnasium together

THE GRAY CARD

and there Mr. Loring left them. As Toby and Beech hurried into their street clothes Beech said: "Some of the fellows think Loring doesn't know his business, but I don't see what their kick is. I guess he knows as much hockey as he needs. I like him, don't you?"

"Awfully," agreed Toby emphatically. "They say that he was responsible for losing the Broadwood game last year. Did you play then?"

"Not on the first, no. But there's no sense in blaming Loring for the loss of that game. He did the best he could, I guess. The trouble was that Broadwood had a team that played all around us. They skated better and shot better and checked harder. They played like a team and we played like seven individuals. We didn't do so badly the first half, but after that Broadwood got a goal on a fluke — Henry kicked the puck into his own goal — and that gave them a lead of two, and we went up in the air and played shinney all the rest of the game. At that they only licked us seven to three; or maybe it was eight to four; something like that. I hope to goodness we sock it to 'em good and hard this time, though. He

GUARDING HIS GOAL

evidently expects you to play goal in that game, Tucker."

"I hope I'll be good enough to," replied Toby.
"I — I'd like it awfully."

"Of course you would," laughed the other.
"I'd like it myself. I've been playing two years already — three, counting this — and I've never got nearer the first team than I am now."

"I don't see why," said Toby. "You shoot wonderfully, I think."

"Oh, I don't know." Beech shrugged. "I play pretty fair sometimes and then the next day I don't. I have pretty good fun with the second, though, and it's something to be captain of that. I've no kick coming. We'd better beat it, Tucker. There goes twelve o'clock!"

They dashed upstairs and out the door, Toby with one shoe-lace flapping in the breeze, and sprinted across to Oxford, Beech winning the race with six yards to spare.

The morning practice was continued the next day and the next, and Toby profited far more than he had dared hope to. In the afternoons he had varying fortune, one day spending most of the playing time on the bench and once going

THE GRAY CARD

in for the second period against the second. It was always Beech that Toby feared the most now, for the rivalry developed in the morning practice moved both to extra exertions, and, while Toby knew Beech's attack pretty well, it was equally true that Beech knew Toby's weaknesses. As far as Toby could see, Crowell still favored Frank Lamson for the position. In fact, Toby was fairly sure that if Coach Loring hadn't been there Crowell would have left him on the bench most days. Frank's playing grew neither better nor worse. He was brilliant at times, but never what could be called steady, and he had a bad habit of losing his temper after a tally had been scored on him and playing in an indifferent, swashbuckling sort of fashion for minutes afterwards. Henry was still absent from work and rumor now had it that he had virtually given up hope of reinstatement in time for further playing this season. Toby was sorry for him, but he wouldn't have been human had he mourned over-much. With Henry out of it, and only Frank Lamson to contend with, Toby's chance of making the coveted position in time for the Broadwood game brightened each day.

There was no morning practice on Friday, for,

GUARDING HIS GOAL

although Toby went to the rink dressed for play, Mr. Loring failed to show up. Toby took part in a weird contest with eight preparatory class fellows and had a good time, but he regretted wasting that hour. Later, in the afternoon, it appeared that Mr. Loring had had to go home and would not be able to get back until the first of the next week. Toby was sorry to hear that, for he had secretly hoped that the coach would let him get in for a part of the Nordham game the next afternoon, perhaps for a full period. With Mr. Loring absent, however, Toby felt pretty certain that he would view that contest from the bench. Later, returning to his room at dusk, he found something that made him wonder whether he would even sit on the bench to-morrow!

The something was a gray card, one of the printed forms used by the Office on which only the name, day and hour were written in.

"The Principal desires to see Tobias Tucker in the School Office Saturday at 9 A. M.

Respectfully,

J. T. THOMPSON, Secretary."

That is what the card said.

Toby said: "*Gee!*"

CHAPTER XVIII

IN THE OFFICE

A H, Tucker," greeted Doctor Collins the next morning. "Sit down, please." Toby lowered himself carefully to the edge of a leather-seated chair at the end of the big flat-topped desk and clutched his cap desperately. The Principal laid aside the letter he had been reading and swung around in his chair until he faced the visitor. "How are you getting on, my boy?" he asked, gravely pleasant.

Toby took courage. Perhaps things weren't going to be as bad as he had feared. "All right, sir, thanks," he answered.

"Having no trouble with your studies?"

"No, sir, not much."

"Any at all?"

"Why, I don't get on so well with Latin," said Toby hesitantly. "But everything else is all right, I think."

Doctor Collins picked up a card at his elbow

GUARDING HIS GOAL

and looked it over. "Your report for last month is very fair, Tucker," he said. "There's nothing here to indicate any difficulty with Latin." He looked inquiringly over the top of the card.

"I—I only meant that sometimes it was very hard to get, sir," replied the boy, "but I generally get it."

"Oh, I see!" The Doctor smiled. "That's another story. I'm glad you are getting along as well as you are, Tucker," he continued more soberly. "You see, when we award a scholarship to a student we look to him to prove our judgment correct. We expect him to maintain an excellent class standing and be very particular as to deportment and always obedient to the school regulations. We try to have as few regulations as possible, but of necessity there are some. In short, Tucker, we expect a scholarship student to set an example to others, an example of studiousness, earnestness and good behavior. You understand?"

"Yes, sir," murmured Toby.

"Do you go in for athletics any, Tucker?"

"Hockey, sir."

"Does that take much of your time? More,

IN THE OFFICE

I mean, than the two hours which the school expects you to devote to outdoor exercise?"

"N-no, sir, I guess not. Yes, sir, it does, too, because since last Tuesday I've been practicing with Grover Beech for an hour in the morning."

"At what time?"

"From eleven to twelve, sir. We neither of us have a recitation then."

"What time do you get up usually, Tucker?"

"About seven, sir. Sometimes before."

"And breakfast at about half-past seven?"

"Yes, sir, usually. Sometimes it's a quarter to eight, if I wait for — for Deering."

"Then you're through by eight-thirty generally? In plenty of time for chapel?"

"Yes, sir, always."

"Now tell me what the trouble was on Monday. You missed chapel that morning, I believe?"

"Yes, sir," Toby hesitated. "I didn't know how late —" He paused again and then added desperately: "I forgot about it, sir."

"That's what this report says, Tucker, but I can't quite understand how you could forget a thing that happens every morning, as regularly

GUARDING HIS GOAL

as breakfast. I see that you missed chapel only once before, early in October, on which occasion you were excused from attendance. That is right?"

"Yes, sir, the doctor excused me. I had a sore throat."

"But nothing of the sort Monday last? It was just forgetfulness, Tucker?"

"Yes, sir," muttered Toby.

"I wish you had a better excuse," said the Doctor, after a moment, tapping the card against a thumb-nail and studying Toby frowningly. "Your record is so clean otherwise—" He broke off and tossed the card on the desk. "Are you forgetful by nature, my boy?"

"No, sir, I — I have a pretty good memory, I guess."

"Then how do you account for your mental lapse in this case?"

Toby studied his hands for an instant in silence. Then he glanced up and saw something in the Principal's face that prompted him to attempt an explanation. "I guess I'd better try to explain, sir," he said, smiling appealingly. The Doctor nodded.

IN THE OFFICE

"I think so, too, Tucker. Take your time. What happened, just?"

"After breakfast, sir, I went up to Arnold Deering's room with him to tell him something. It was something that had happened to me that was — pretty nice, and I thought Arn — Deering would be pleased about it."

"Wasn't he?" prompted the Doctor when Toby paused.

"Not so much as I thought he would be. You see, sir, we're — we're chums." The Doctor nodded sympathetically. "Then he said he guessed I was wrong about — about what I'd told him, and then — then we quarreled!"

"I see. Was that your fault, Tucker?"

"No, sir."

"Quite sure?"

Toby thought. "Well, I guess it was partly my fault, sir, but he was awfully unreasonable!"

The Doctor smiled broadly. "And you weren't, eh?" he inquired.

"Maybe I was, too," granted Toby, reflecting the smile dimly.

"Well, you quarreled. Then what happened? Did you make up?"

GUARDING HIS GOAL

"No, sir, he said I was to go out and not come back until I had apologized. And so I did. And then I went upstairs to my room and — and —" Toby faltered.

"Kicked the furniture around?"

"No, sir." Toby shook his head. "I just — just sat down, I guess, and then, after awhile, I looked at the clock and it was nearly nine. And so I came over here and asked to see you and Mr. Thompson said I couldn't and I told him. I — I'm very sorry, sir."

"I see, Tucker." The Doctor swung away around in his swivel chair and faced one of the broad windows. When he spoke next his face was away from Toby and the boy had to listen hard to hear what he said. "I wonder what your idea of friendship is, my boy. You tell me that you and this other boy were chums. That means that you were fond of each other, would make almost any sacrifice for each other. I know something about friendships between boys. I've seen so many of them, Tucker, and some very beautiful ones. And the beautiful ones have always, I think, been based on unselfishness. In fact, I doubt if a true friendship can exist without the

IN THE OFFICE

constant sacrifice of self. I wish you'd think that over, Tucker." The Doctor paused and then swung slowly around again in his chair. "The momentary satisfaction that one gets from yielding to one's temper, Tucker, doesn't begin to make up for the consequences. See what has happened in your own case. You have made yourself unhappy and this other boy, too. Your self-respect has suffered. Later you will take up your friendship, I hope, and go on with it, but you can't take it up just as you left it off, Tucker. There will always be a mended place in it, my boy, and you know that a mended place is always weak. A friendship is too fine a thing to take any chances with. One ought to be as careful with a friendship as one would be with a beautiful piece of delicate glass."

The Doctor picked up the card again, looked at it a moment and once more laid it aside. Then, in more matter-of-fact tones, he went on: "I'm glad you explained to me, Tucker, for it puts a different interpretation on your 'forgetfulness.' It wasn't forgetfulness that caused you to miss chapel, but anger. In so far as I am able to judge, Tucker, it is that temper of yours that will cause

GUARDING HIS GOAL

you the most trouble in life. If I were you I would start out now to learn to control it, and I wouldn't stop until I had succeeded. A man without the capacity for becoming angry is not much use in the world, but a man who is unable to control his anger is not only useless but positively dangerous, to himself and the community. Anger controlled is a powerful weapon in the grasp of a strong man, Tucker, but anger uncontrolled is like a child's sword whittled from a lathe and breaks in our hands, and often wounds us in the breaking. Now I'm going to make a bargain with you, my boy, subject to your agreement. I'll write the word 'excused' on this card if you will give me your promise to go out from here and sit down somewhere quite by yourself and think over very carefully what I have been saying. Will you do that?"

"Yes, sir," answered Toby subduedly.

"That's all then, Tucker. I'm not going to make any suggestions as to the healing of the breach with your chum. Those things have to work themselves out in their own way. Only remember, my boy, that friendship and selfishness never mix. Good-morning, Tucker."

IN THE OFFICE

Toby went back to his room and closed the door behind him and kept his agreement to the letter. That is, he recalled very carefully all that Doctor Collins had told him and weighed it. And agreed with it, too. As to that temper of his, thought Toby, the Doctor was absolutely right. It did need controlling. Normally good tempered, when he did let go he let go altogether. He could almost count on the fingers of his two hands the times when he had been thoroughly angry, but each time, as he recalled, the result had been disastrous. Always he had made himself unhappy and usually some one else. And always he had been horribly sorry afterwards, when it was too late. He wondered how one went about learning to control one's temper. The Doctor hadn't told him that. Well, he would find a way. The Doctor had said he could do it, and so he would. The Doctor had been mighty nice to him, too; not at all the stern and severe person that Toby had thought him. He was glad he had made a clean confession of the whole silly business. For it was silly, frightfully silly. The idea of quarreling with Arn like that! Why, he would do just about anything for Arn! And Arn — well, maybe Arn

GUARDING HIS GOAL

didn't care as much as he did, but that had nothing to do with it, because the Doctor had said that friendship must be unselfish, and demanding a return for what you gave, even of affection, was selfish! And the Doctor was right, too, as right as anything! If you — cared for some one you just naturally wanted to do things for him, and you didn't stop to think what you were getting in return. No, sir, you didn't *care*!

Toby aroused from his communing and looked startled at the clock. But it was all right. He still had fourteen minutes before his English recitation. And fourteen minutes was more than enough to do what he wanted to do in. He jumped up and found a sheet of paper and an envelope and wrote hurriedly:

"Dear Arn:

"I'm awfully sorry I was such a rotter. I wish you would forgive me and forget all about it if you can. If you want me to apologize to F. L. I will. Maybe he didn't do it, anyway. I guess he didn't. Anyhow, I never meant to say anything about it only I got angry and did say it, for which I am very sorry and hope you will forgive me.

Your friend,

"TOBY."

Toby didn't knock on Arnold's door, for he

IN THE OFFICE

wasn't sure whether Arnold was out, and, while he had the courage to write the note, to hand it to him would be a different matter. So he slipped it under the door and hurried across to Oxford, feeling much happier than he had felt for several days.

He caught only a brief glimpse of Arnold that forenoon and when dinner time came he awaited his chum's arrival anxiously. He knew Arnold too well to expect him to fall on his neck, so to speak, but it wouldn't be hard to discover whether he was willing to make up. Arnold would probably say "Hello, T. Tucker," and grin a little, and that's all there'd be to it, and Toby would know that it was all right! But it didn't happen that way at all. Arnold came in late, seated himself without so much as a glance across the table at Toby and entered into conversation with Kendall. Toby's heart fell. Arn wasn't going to forgive him! Then the comforting thought came to him that perhaps Arnold hadn't been to his room yet and so hadn't read the note. That was undoubtedly the explanation, and Toby recovered his spirits and ate a very satisfactory dinner. It was almost as though they were friends again, for,

GUARDING HIS GOAL

although Arnold didn't know it, there was that note awaiting him upstairs, and when he had read it everything would be fine once more! So Toby got up from the table quite contentedly and rattled up two flights of stairs to his room in order to put in a quarter of an hour at history before a two o'clock recitation. And he whistled merrily until he threw the door open and saw a square blue-gray envelope lying there. It was one of Arnold's envelopes. He had written instead of — of — Toby picked up the note sadly and went to the window with it.

"Just being sorry (he read) doesn't make up for what you said. You made accusations that you knew were false. When you acknowledge that they are false I will accept an appology and not before."

"Respectfully,

"ARNOLD DEERING."

Toby sighed.

"And he spelled 'apology' with two P's," he muttered, as though that was the last straw. "And he's still angry. Gee, I can't go and tell him that I know Frank didn't swipe that money, because I know he *did*. I suppose I might tell a lie about it, though. I wish — I wish Frank would choke!" He slipped the note back into

IN THE OFFICE

the envelope, thrust it impatiently into the drawer and closed the drawer with a vindictive *bang*. “All right, then, he can stay mad. I’m not going to say what isn’t so for him or any one else. ‘Just being sorry doesn’t make up for it!’ I’d like to know what else you can be but sorry. If he thinks it’s so easy to — to be sorry — I mean say you’re sorry and apologize, then why doesn’t he do a little of it? He makes me tired! I don’t care a fig whether —”

Toby paused right there in his muttering, swallowed hard and looked sheepish.

“Gee,” he thought, “I nearly did it again! I’m glad Doctor Collins didn’t hear me! I guess the hard thing about controlling your temper is to know when you’re not!” With which cryptic reflection Toby made his way sadly downstairs just as the two o’clock bell began to ring.

CHAPTER XIX

A PAIR OF GLOVES

THE hockey game with Nordham that Saturday afternoon left a good deal to be desired in science and interest. In the first place, and I mention it as a mitigating circumstance, two days of mild weather had left the ice in very poor condition and good skating was out of the question. A half-inch of water lay over the surface and against the boards on the sunny side of the rink the ice was fairly rotten. Nordham presented a hard-working aggregation of talent, a team of lithe, well-trained youths who looked not only in the pink of condition but able for speed and skill as well. Toby viewed that contest from the bench, for, lacking Coach Loring's prompting, Captain Crowell failed to so much as cock an eye at the substitute goal-tend. However, there was no necessity at any stage of the game for a relief for Frank Lamson. Frank had so little to do that he was palpably bored, since

A PAIR OF GLOVES

as poorly as Yardley played that day Nordham somehow managed to play far worse. Her forwards performed fairly well, considering an entire absence of team-play, but her defense was pitifully weak and Yardley, once past the center of the rink, had only to keep on her feet in order to score. Twelve tallies in the first period against two for Nordham, and seven more in the last to the visitor's three was the outcome of the contest. The spectators hung over the barrier listlessly and almost went to sleep until, toward the end, when Crowell put in three substitute forwards and a substitute cover point, the contest became so much like a parody on hockey that they found amusement in making fun of the players.

If any particular member of either squad stood out prominently it was Arnold, for Arnold had a particularly good day and scored eight of the nineteen goals. Soft ice seemed to make less difference with his skating than with that of his fellow players, for he dashed up and down and in and out in a particularly startling manner. Nor did he lose the puck as the rest did. Even along the boards on the soft side of the rink he had perfect control over it. Toby, watching, was very

GUARDING HIS GOAL

proud of Arnold and almost forgot about controlling the temper when Simpson, beside him, remarked to his neighbor beyond that "Deering was making a fine play to the gallery!"

As an example of scientific hockey that game was a dismal failure, and as an afternoon's amusement it was no more successful from the viewpoint of the audience. The latter turned away when the final whistle blew looking very much as though it thought it had wasted the better part of an hour and a half. Captain Crowell was a bit peevish afterwards, in the locker-room at the gymnasium, and was heard to speculate pessimistically on what was to happen three weeks later, finally observing that he guessed the only thing that would save Yardley from getting the hide licked off her was a thaw!

Somehow, Toby, wriggling out of his togs — which he might just as well have kept out of that day — couldn't help thinking that if Mr. Loring had been on hand that afternoon that game would have been a heap more like hockey and less like a Donnybrook Fair. And also, he reflected, if Mr. Loring had been there one Tobias Tucker might have been allowed to take some slight part

A PAIR OF GLOVES

in the proceedings. With only three more games left on the schedule Toby's chance of covering himself with glory and gaining the proud privilege of wearing the crossed hockey sticks on his sweater looked very slim. This thought, added to the load of gloom he was already carrying, was almost too much for him. He was rather miserable that evening.

Mr. Loring returned to Yardley on Tuesday morning, a fact made known to Toby when he appeared at the rink while Toby and Grover Beech were earnestly striving to get the better of each other. He looked on for a minute or two and then, after Beech had sprawled into the net and he and Toby were pulling it back into position, he climbed over the barrier and joined them.

"Try these on, Tucker," he said, holding out a pair of goal-tender's gloves of white buckskin. Toby, wondering, dropped his stick to the ice and tugged off the old woolen-lined glove from his right hand. "They may be too large for you," continued Mr. Loring, "but I can have them changed. How do they seem?"

"Fine," answered Toby, awedly, working his fingers luxuriously back and forth and feeling the

GUARDING HIS GOAL

soft, smooth leather give pliably to every motion. Beech, taking the other glove from Toby, admired it warmly.

"Gee, Mr. Loring, but those are dandy!" he said. "I'll bet those cost something! See the open palm, Toby, and the peachy long cuffs on them. Are you going to wear them, sir?"

"Me? No, I got them for Tucker," replied the coach. "Do they seem all right, Tucker?"

"Y-yes, sir, they—they're wonderful, but I—I don't think—" Toby was plainly embarrassed. "What I mean is," he struggled on, "that they're much too good, sir. You see, I can't spend much on gloves."

"They're supposed to be a present," replied Mr. Loring. "If you're too haughty to accept a present—"

"Oh! No, sir, I'm not, but—but they're a lot more expensive I guess, than they need be."

"It doesn't pay to buy cheap leather, my boy. Put on the other one and get used to them."

"Yes, sir," murmured Toby, flustered, trying to pick up his stick, accept the other glove from Beech and find words of thanks at the same moment, with the result that he fumbled stick, glove

A PAIR OF GLOVES

and speech! Beech chuckled, Mr. Loring smiled and Toby colored. "I—I'm most awfully much obliged," the latter managed to enunciate at last. "I don't know how to—to thank you, sir, and—"

"Never mind," laughed the coach. "Actions speak louder than words, Tucker, and I should say that gratitude had simply overwhelmed you!"

Toby laughed too then and struggled into the second glove and smote them together and viewed them proudly, and Mr. Loring and Beech smiled understandingly at each other. After that, although Toby thought that he had utterly failed to meet the situation, the interrupted practice went on. To the amusement of the others, those new gloves quite upset Toby's game and for a few minutes Beech scored goals almost as he liked. But that didn't last and very soon the old struggle for mastery was on again in earnest and Mr. Loring, who had an engagement in the village at twelve and should have been on his way even then, enjoyed the contest so much that he stayed until Beech called a halt. Then he hurried off by the river path with the tails of his fur coat flapping ludicrously in the wind. Toby and Beech, treading

GUARDING HIS GOAL

the squeaky board-walk that led up the slope to the gymnasium, watched and chuckled. At least, Beech chuckled. Toby didn't because nothing that Alfred Loring could do after that morning could ever seem ludicrous to him. He wondered if the coach had guessed that the reason he had no better gloves was because he hadn't the money to buy them with, and concluded he had — and decided that he didn't care. Mr. Loring was much too fine a gentleman to look down on a chap because he happened to be poor. Those gloves were not left in his locker in the gymnasium that day, but accompanied him into class room and commons, to be secretly felt of at intervals.

By that time Toby's exchequer was slightly replenished and he decided that those gloves demanded a pair of leg-guards to go with them. He could buy the leg-guards if he used all his money except a few pennies and he determined to be reckless and get them. Not having Arnold to call on for advice and counsel, he sacrificed most of his dinner the next day, and hurried off to the village alone. As it turned out, Arnold's advice wouldn't have helped him a great deal, for there were but two styles of leg-guards to choose

A PAIR OF GLOVES

from at Fessenden's, one cheap and unworthy the honor of being associated with those new gloves and the other expensive and wonderful. Toby unhesitatingly purchased a pair of the latter sort and counted out his money with a fine feeling of affluence. The only fly in his ointment was that he couldn't put them on then and there and wear them home. Of course he could have done so, too, but he had a suspicion that the residents of Greenburg would stare. But he wore them that afternoon and gloried in the immaculate beauty of the white leather and felt uncomfortably conspicuous until he got interested in stopping the shots at goal and forgot them. They came up well above his knee and down over his ankle-bones, and there were no pesky leather straps punched with holes which were never in the right places. Instead, they were held in place by canvas strips which, once slipped through the clasps, stayed there immovably as long as you wanted them to and undid very easily. In those new white gloves and new white leg-guards Toby looked very fine that afternoon and managed to convey the impression that he was a real, sure-enough goal-tend! Perhaps Crowell was im-

GUARDING HIS GOAL

pressed, for he displayed more interest in Toby than he had since that first talk before Christmas recess. As usual, Toby played at the net in the second period of the practice game with the second, and, perhaps because he was trying to live up to his new togs, got away with a clean score, for not once did the second get the puck into the net. Mr. Loring smiled his satisfaction when Toby passed him on his way off the ice and said:

“Good work, Tucker. Keep it up.”

Toby went back to an hour's study before supper feeling rather well pleased with himself, and had it not been for the falling-out with Arnold would have been a very happy youth that evening. As it was, however, even success on the rink couldn't make him altogether content. He missed Arnold's companionship horribly. What was the use of making a success of hockey if there was no one to talk it over with? He tried to think of some chap who could take Arnold's place, but there didn't seem to be any. He was friendly with quite a number of fellows now, but none of them were intimates. Grover Beech would talk hockey with him by the hour, but his interest paled the moment another subject was introduced. No,

A PAIR OF GLOVES

Toby could think of no one who would care to listen to his confidences. He got pretty lonely at times about now.

When he and Arnold met, Toby's rather wistful glances went unseen or, being seen, met no response. Arnold always looked over him or past him, coldly and unforgivingly. There were times when Toby was tempted to humble himself, to offer any sort of apology or atonement in return for a re-establishment of their old friendship, but always at the last moment pride or embarrassment intervened. Subsequent to such periods of weakness Toby went to the opposite extreme and sullenly vowed that he would never have anything more to do with Arnold; no, sir, not even if Arnold begged him on his knees!

Arnold appeared strangely morose and crabbed those days. At table he was short-tempered and often uncivil. He and Gladwin almost came to blows one evening over a discussion of some perfectly trivial subject, and it finally got so that the others carefully left him alone. All, that is to say, except Homer Wilkins. Arnold's perversities had no effect on Homer. If Arnold was cross, Homer merely assured him earnestly and

GUARDING HIS GOAL

good-temperedly that he hoped he would choke.

Oddly enough, Frank Lamson began to develop a sort of friendship for Toby. He seldom met him without stopping and talking. The conversation was never very important or very confidential, but Frank seemed to derive satisfaction from it. At first Toby was embarrassed, but after awhile he found himself quite ready to stop and chat. For one thing, Frank was near to Arnold and Toby could speak of the latter to him. One day — Frank had found Toby idly reading the notices on the bulletin board in the corridor of Oxford while awaiting a recitation — Frank observed:

“ Say, Toby, what’s up between you and Arn? He seems to have a peach of a grouch about something, and I notice you don’t go around much together any more. What’s wrong, eh? ”

“ Oh, nothing,” answered Toby evasively. “ What — what does Arn say? ”

Frank shrugged. “ Nothing. Just scowls. I thought you two were regular what-do-you-call’ems — Damon and — what was the other chap’s name? ”

“ Pythias? ”

A PAIR OF GLOVES

"I guess so. What have you quarreled about?"

But Toby was silent, and Frank, amusing himself by running the end of a pencil across the radiator pipes, evoking a discordant result that appeared to give him much pleasure, went on: "Gee, you and he were so inseparable at Christmas time that I never saw Arn but once all during vacation, and that was Christmas morning when I went down to his room to leave a present."

"That was an awfully pretty pin he gave you," remarked Toby carelessly.

"What pin?" asked Frank in puzzled tones.

"The one I saw you wearing several times. It was a moonstone, wasn't it?"

"That? Arn didn't give me that. My mother did. Arn gave me a book. Forget the name of it now. It was pretty punk. I hate folks to give me books for Christmas, don't you?"

"No, I like them," replied Toby. There was, he thought, no reason why he should be so delighted at discovering that Arnold had not given Frank that scarf-pin, but delighted he was nevertheless, and his pleasure made him quite cordial

GUARDING HIS GOAL

and friendly toward Frank. "That was a dandy pin, and I was sure Arn had given it to you."

"Well, he didn't," returned the other indifferently. "He gave me a silly book." He chuckled. "He didn't get anything on me, though, at that, for I gave him a half-dozen handkerchiefs! I'd rather get a book than handkerchiefs, eh?"

"A good deal rather!" laughed Toby. "Useful things like handkerchiefs and stockings and gloves are mighty nice to have, but you always feel as though folks ought to give you things that aren't useful at Christmas, don't you?"

"Absolutely! What did Arn give you, Toby?"

"A pair of gold cuff-links."

"Fine!" Frank glanced down at Toby's wrists. "Got 'em on?"

"No, I — they're too dressy to wear every day."

Frank grinned. "So peeved you won't even wear his present, eh? Sic him, Prince! I dare say whatever the row is, it's Arn's fault. He's a stubborn brute. I've known him for five or six years, I guess, and I know his tricks. Arn isn't a bad sort, of course, but he's mighty cranky some-

A PAIR OF GLOVES

times. Well, he will get over it, Toby. Let him alone, eh?"

Toby made no response. He was wondering what Frank would say if he was told that he was the reason of the quarrel. Frank varied his performance on the radiator by tapping the coils and looked hurt when they all developed about the same notes.

"You know Tommy Lingard, don't you?" asked Toby suddenly.

Frank nodded without looking up, continuing his hopeless search for music. "Yes, I know Tommy after a fashion. What about him?"

"Nothing. He said one time that he knew you pretty well."

"He will say anything, the little rotter," replied Frank cheerfully. "Tommy's one of the finest little impromptu, catch-as-catch-can liars in school. Still, he managed to tell the truth for once. My folks know his folks at home. They live on the same street with us. His old man's a nice old sort. Has a heap of money. Made it easy, too."

"Did he?" asked Toby. "How?"

"Just by cutting-up."

GUARDING HIS GOAL

"Cutting-up? How do you mean?"

"He was a butcher," laughed Frank. "I spring that one on Tommy when he gets too fresh. He's a beast of a nuisance that kid. Always wanting to borrow money from me. He has plenty of his own, but he spends it on candy and truck like that and is always broke. Well, here we go! What do you have this hour?"

"Math," answered Toby. "Mr. McIntyre."

"'Kilts,' eh? He's a good old sort, 'Kilts' is. Well, so long. See you at practice." Frank nodded, still a trifle condescendingly, and strolled off after one final hopeless tap on a steam coil, leaving Toby to gather his books and make his way down the corridor in the other direction. If, he pondered, young Lingard was really the liar that Frank dubbed him perhaps his story about getting that patched dollar from Frank was untruthful. On the other hand, though, Frank had said that Lingard was always trying to borrow money. And if that was so, why, what more probable than that Frank had loaned him some, as Lingard had stated? Well, he would probably never know the real truth of it. And, besides, he had agreed with himself to forget it.

A PAIR OF GLOVES

So there was no use speculating about it. But, just the same, he wished he knew! Somehow it wasn't so easy to-day to believe in Frank's guilt. And somehow revenging himself on Frank by beating him out for the position of goal-tend didn't appeal to him nearly so much as it had a few days before. Of course the mere fact that Arnold hadn't given Frank that scarf-pin proved nothing, but Toby got a lot of satisfaction from it!

CHAPTER XX

CAPTAIN AND COACH

THREE'S a saying to the effect that "clothes make the man." It isn't true, as you and I both know very well. And it is probably equally untrue that togs make the hockey player. And yet — well, those new leg-guards and those new gloves certainly had an effect on Toby. Or something did. On Thursday before the Rock Hill College game, which was, with the exception of the final contest with Broadwood, considered the most important event on the hockey schedule, Toby performed so creditably that Captain Crowell sought Coach Loring afterwards for counsel.

"That kid Tucker's playing pretty nearly as well as Lamson, sir, don't you think?" he asked. They were walking up to the gymnasium behind the others and Mr. Loring was making the boards creak as he stamped his feet to warm them. "The way he played to-day was corking, I

CAPTAIN AND COACH

thought." Crowell's admiration sounded grudging and the coach glanced at him speculatively before he spoke.

"What have you got against Tucker, Crowell?" he asked.

"Not a thing," answered Crowell in surprise.
"What made you think I had, sir?"

"Well, for a week and more Tucker has played a bit better than Lamson and you haven't so much as mentioned it—or him. I began to think that possibly you had some personal—er—dislike, Crowell."

"If I had," answered the captain a trifle stiffly,
"I wouldn't let it influence me, sir."

"Glad to hear it," was the untroubled response. "If you want my opinion, Tucker's a better goal than Lamson right now and he will get better every day."

Crowell was silent for a minute. Then:
"You think we'd better use him Saturday, sir?" he asked.

"By all means. He needs the experience, Crowell. If he doesn't fill the bill, put in Lamson, but by all means give Tucker a chance to get some work against an outside team. You never

GUARDING HIS GOAL

can tell what any player is good for until he's run up against some one beside his own crowd."

"It sounds as though you'd already picked him for the Broadwood game," said Crowell doubtfully.

Mr. Loring smiled. "I had, but you needn't unless you want to. I'm not interfering with your choice of players, Crowell. I told you I didn't intend to when I started in. It would be a lot easier for me if I did do that. A coach who hasn't absolute control always works at a disadvantage. But I realized that you didn't particularly want me here this year and that it wouldn't do to antagonize you."

Crowell colored. "I don't think you have any reason to say that, Mr. Loring," he stammered. "I've been very glad to have you."

"Rather than no one, yes," replied Mr. Loring dryly. "Possibly you have wondered why I 'butted in' this winter. I'll tell you. A number of us Old Boys got to talking things over one afternoon in the club in New York and the question of a hockey coach came up. I was asked if I was going to help again this year and said that I had had no request; that since we had lost to

CAPTAIN AND COACH

Broadwood last year I thought that probably the sentiment here was in favor of a change. We all felt that things ought to be pulled together and we got in touch with Mr. Bendix by telephone. He told us that you were looking for a coach but hadn't found any one. Nothing more was done then. That was in December. I think about the tenth. During vacation Mr. Bendix happened into the club one day and the subject of hockey came up again. He said that they were still without a coach and that he thought it would be well for some of us to take the matter up and send some one down there. Two or three old players were approached, but none of them could give the time. For that matter, I didn't feel that I could spare the time myself, but there seemed to be no one else and the others insisted and so I came. I might have taken everything right out of your hands, Crowell, and put myself in full command, as I was last season. Faculty advised me to, but I knew you well enough to realize that the only way we could turn out any sort of a team was for you and I to pull together, my boy. You didn't want me and you wouldn't have had me if you could have found some one else. I didn't much

GUARDING HIS GOAL

care whether you wanted me or not, however. We grads want good teams here and we want the old school to win her games. My interest begins and ends there. So far you and I have got along very well, but it's been mainly because I've taken pains not to interfere a bit more than has been absolutely necessary. Now we've come to a situation that demands a sort of a show-down, I guess. Suppose you tell me frankly why you dislike the idea of having Tucker play goal instead of Lamson."

"I haven't a thing against Tucker, sir," replied Crowell slowly, evidently choosing his words with care, "unless it's his age. He's pretty young to be a first team goal-tend, isn't he?"

"Yes, but if he can play the position it doesn't seem to me that his age has much to do with it. What's the rest of it?"

"That's all, Mr. Loring, really," insisted Crowell. "I guess that the fact of the matter is that I — I just got used to the idea of a certain fellow playing a position and hate to think of changing."

"That's a bad idea, Crowell. Every team is likely to have some dead-wood in it that needs cutting out. You want the seven best players in

CAPTAIN AND COACH

there that you can find, irrespective of age or social affiliations or anything else. Isn't that so?"

"Yes, sir, it is. Is there any other dead-wood? Have you any other fellows in mind?"

"No, I think not. I'd like to see Casement get a good, thorough trial at right wing, for Deerling's been playing pretty erratically of late, but I'm not prepared to say that Casement is a better man. As to Tucker, I'd advise using him harder, giving him a fairer show, Crowell. If he is really better than Lamson let's find it out. We want the best man at goal on Saturday and two weeks from Saturday that we can discover. Personally I believe Tucker's the man, but I may be wrong. Is Lamson a particular friend of yours?"

Crowell frowned. "No, he's not," he answered shortly.

"Oh, I didn't mean it that way," said the coach soothingly. "I only wondered if you were hesitating about hurting his feelings. If you are, you might let me attend to the matter. When it comes to building a team they all look alike to me."

Crowell made no answer for a minute. They had reached the gymnasium and had paused in the

GUARDING HIS GOAL

upstairs hall. Finally the captain looked up frankly, if a trifle embarrassedly, at the coach. "I guess, sir," he said, "you don't want to turn out a winning team any more than I do. And I think it will be best if you just — just take charge of everything after this. I suppose I'm sort of dunder-headed about some things. If I choose a fellow for a position I'm likely to let him stay there rather than acknowledge that I'm wrong even to myself, and that's mighty poor management. I'm sorry if I've acted like an idiot all the season, sir —"

"You haven't, Crowell. I didn't mean to convey the impression that I was dissatisfied. Everything has gone along quite smoothly, my boy. If there have been mistakes we've shared them. But I'm not going to pretend that I'm not mighty glad to take full charge, because, quite frankly, I think you'll play your position a lot better if you don't have too many — er — too many cares of state on your mind! Suppose that after this we get in the way of meeting after practice, say in your room, or in mine if you don't mind walking down to the village, and going over things together. That seem feasible to you? "

CAPTAIN AND COACH

"Yes, sir, I think it would be a mighty good plan," answered Captain Crowell. "I guess it would have been better for the team if we'd done that long ago, Mr. Loring."

"Possibly. But we won't worry ourselves with regrets. We'll look forward, Crowell, and see if we can't pull that team together so that it will everlastingly wallop Broadwood two weeks from next Saturday! I dare say that what I should have done is had this talk with you a month ago. But never mind that now. I'll drop around to-morrow evening—I guess we've said all that's to be said for the present—and we'll plan things for Saturday. Good-night, Crowell."

Mr. Loring held out his hand and Crowell grasped it tightly.

"Good-night, sir," he said, "and thanks. I'm not nearly so afraid of the Broadwood game as I was! You do think we can win it, don't you, sir?"

"Hands down, Cap!" answered the coach. "You wait and see what we can accomplish in two weeks of pulling together!"

And so it came about that when the referee skated to the center of the rink armed with puck

GUARDING HIS GOAL

and whistle two afternoons later it was Toby Tucker who stood guard at the south goal, Toby very sturdy-looking and straight in toque and sweater and padded khaki pants and magnificent white leg-guards, his white-gloved hands holding his stick across his body, his blue eyes very bright and alert and his mouth set firmly and straight. Toby made a dazzling figure there in the cold sunlight of a boisterous winter day and, in his costume of dark-blue and white, against the yellow boards of the barrier and the wind-swept sky above, might almost have stepped from a poster. In front of him Hal Framer leaned on his stick, and beyond stood Ted Halliday, and then Crumbie, and, finally, facing the Rock Hill left wing, Orson Crowell. To the right was Arnold Deering and to the left Jim Rose. At the other end of the rink, poised on impatient skates, was the Rock Hill College team, colorful in gray and crimson. A hard, north-westerly gale blew across the ice, stinging faces and numbing fingers and, at times, whirling little clouds of powdery snow in air. A steady *thump-thump* sounded as the spectators crowded close to the barrier kicked their shoes against the boards to warm fast-chilling feet.

CAPTAIN AND COACH

Behind the nets, ulstered, hands plunged deep into warm pockets, the goal umpires stood and shivered. Then the referee poised the puck with one hand above the waiting sticks and raised the whistle to his lips. The tattoo against the boards died away. A shrill blast sounded, the gray disk of rubber dropped to the ice, sticks clashed, skate-blades bit and the game began.

On the bench, one of a half-dozen other coated and blanketed figures, sat Frank Lamson. Frank was still struggling with the surprise that had overwhelmed him three minutes before when Coach Loring, calling the line-up, had announced the name of Tucker instead of Lamson. Frank was still not quite sure the coach had not made a mistake! Only, if he had, why didn't he discover it? And what was Orson Crowell thinking of that he hadn't entered a protest against such absurdity? Frank stole a wondering glance along the length of the bench to where Coach Loring sat. The coach was looking intently at the game and evidently saw nothing wrong. Slowly, as the figures dashed up and down and in and out and the ring of steel and the clash of sticks and the cries of the players filled the air, it was borne to Frank

GUARDING HIS GOAL

that Toby had superseded him, that Coach Loring had done what he had done intentionally, that Crowell had connived at it, that, in short, he, Frank Lamson, was only a second-string man! Surprise grew to incredulity and incredulity to dismay. He wondered what the fellows on the bench with him thought of it, and turned to see. But they were all following the flying puck absorbedly, evidently with no thought for the stupendous wrong that had been committed! Indignation surged over him. Anger filled his soul. So they thought they could treat him that way and get away with it, did they? They thought they could oust him without a word of explanation and put a mere fifteen-year-old, inexperienced kid in his place? Well, they'd find out their mistake! No one could treat him like a yellow pup, by jingo! He'd show them so, too! Superbly he arose from the bench, dropped his blanket with a gesture of magnificent disdain and turned his back on the scene. Unfortunately, however, not a soul saw him, for at that moment Rock Hill had the puck in front of the Yardley goal and six pushing, slashing players were fighting desperately there. And no one saw him make his way off up the slope,

CAPTAIN AND COACH

bracing himself against the gale, for just then the referee's whistle sounded and Rock Hill was brandishing sticks in triumph and skating, with perhaps a mere suggestion of swagger, back to her own territory. So Frank's dramatic defiance was lost and neither Coach Loring nor Captain Crowell nor any of Frank's companions knew that he had withdrawn in outraged dignity and left them to their fate.

The game went on again. Toby, a little pale, crouched and watched. He was hating himself for letting the puck get by a minute ago. It had been almost impossible to follow it. Sticks, feet, bodies had mingled confusedly before him. He had repelled one attempt after another with skates and stick, the goal had tilted under the surge of the struggling players, blades had whacked against his leg-guards, the world had been a maelstrom of blue legs and crimson — and then the whistle had blown and, behold, there was the puck a fair six inches past the opening! How it had got by him he never knew, but there it was, and the goal umpire had waved his hand and the tragic blast of the whistle had sounded! And Toby's heart was filled with woe!

GUARDING HIS GOAL

But there wasn't much time to spend in regrets, for once more the Rock Hill forwards, strung out across the ice four-abreast, were bearing down on him. The puck slithered away across to the left and Arnold charged at his opponent. But a carrom against the boards fooled him and the red-legged enemy secured the disk again and slid it back. Halliday missed it by an inch and he and the left center went down in a kicking heap. There was only Framer now, and the puck was but twenty feet away. Toby slid to the left, crouched, his heart beating hard.

Framer tried to intercept the pass to the right wing but only succeeded in diverting the puck to the right center. Crowell, dashing in like a whirlwind, lifted the opponent's stick, slashed at the puck, missed it and went past. Framer was on it — had it — was off down the ice, almost free! Followed a wild scramble then. The Rock Hill cover point fell slowly back to position. Crowell fell in behind Framer and Arnold tried hard to get into place for a pass. Then the cover point dashed forward, Framer slipped the puck to the right and dodged to the left, skates grated harshly, Arnold swerved in,

CAPTAIN AND COACH

reached, found the disk with his stick, circled back, passed across to Crumbie —

“*Shoot!*” yelled Crowell.

“*Shoot!*” implored the spectators.

But the Rock Hill point was rushing desperately at Crumbie, his stick slashing the ice, and it was Jim Rose, coming in from the rear, who hooked the puck away just in time and, miraculously dodging the defenders in front of the cage, banged it home for Yardley’s first score.

Pæans of delight arose from around the barrier and the blue blades of the Yardley sticks waved in air. The Rock Hill goal was telling the point just how it had happened and finding comfort in explaining. Then they were off again, Rose having the puck along the boards. A pass to the center of the ice went wrong and it was the Rock Hill cover point who became the man of the moment. But his reign was brief and ended when Rose sent him sprawling into the barrier. A Rock Hill forward stole the disk and skated desperately, but there was no one to take the pass and ten yards in front of the Blue’s goal Halliday got it away and fed it down the ice. And so it went for the rest of that first period, with no more scores for either

GUARDING HIS GOAL

side. Twice Rock Hill threatened dangerously and eight times she shot, but only three attempts reached Toby and those were stopped without difficulty. For her part, Yardley only once came near to scoring and then the puck struck an upright and bounded away and Crowell's attempt to cage it only sent it over the barrier into the snow.

On the whole, Toby had a fairly easy time of it during that half of the contest. It was in the second period that he found his work cut out for him, for, after the rest, Rock Hill showed that she could play hockey. Halliday was hurt in the first minute of play and Stillwell took his place. Five minutes after that Crumbie was sent off for tripping, and it was then that Rock Hill almost snatched a victory. That she didn't was only due to the fact that Toby, looking ridiculously small but making up for his lack of bulk by his quickness, played his position like a veteran. Stillwell was not Halliday's equal on defense, and, with Crumbie off, Rock Hill kept the puck around the Blue's goal for what seemed hours to the goal-tend. Shot after shot was made, knocked down and brushed aside. The applause from the audience was almost continual and the shouting of

CAPTAIN AND COACH

the contenders made a babel through which Toby, inwardly in a wild ferment of excitement but outwardly as cool as the ice he stood on, slid from one side of the cage to the other, crouched, straightened, kicked with his skates, thrust with his stick and watched all the time with his blue eyes, never losing sight of the puck. Time and again, having shot, Rock Hill secured the disk the instant Toby thrust it aside. Yardley, minus one player, slashed and sprawled and shouted helplessly, with Crowell commanding them to "Get it out of there!" That was a wild and strenuous two minutes for Toby, but he came through with a clean slate. The scorer credited him with seven stops in that busy space of time, but Toby is still of the opinion that the scorer missed some thirty-five or forty! And then, finally, just as Crumbie tumbled over the barrier again and rushed to the rescue, Arnold pulled the puck from a Rock Hill forward and got free with it.

But there was no getting past the opponent's outer defense now. Cover point and point had learned their lesson in the first period and, with a center playing back on defense, Yardley's rushes never took her past the outer trenches. Toward

GUARDING HIS GOAL

the end of the period both teams were trying long shots and failing miserably. Casement took Arnold's place when the latter bruised his knee against the barrier, and, just before the whistle, Flagg displaced Framer. But the period ended without another tally, the score still one to one.

Five minutes of rest, then, and back to the battle once more for two five-minute periods. Then it was that Coach Loring, deciding to relieve a very tired Toby, called for Lamson and discovered him missing. Messengers were dispatched to the gymnasium but returned to report that Frank was not to be found. Coach Loring scowled, shrugged and viewed Toby doubtfully. Then he conferred with Captain Crowell and the two put the matter up to Toby himself.

"I'll be all right in a minute or two," panted the boy cheerfully. "Tired? No, sir, I don't feel tired a bit!"

Coach Loring smiled. "All right, then, you'd better try the next period anyway. If Lamson turns up we'll let you off. Do the best you can, Tucker. We've fought them off so far and it would certainly be too bad to lose the game now, wouldn't it?"

CAPTAIN AND COACH

"Yes, sir! I'll stop them if it can be done, Mr. Loring."

And then, presently, they were at it again, with the twilight fast creeping down over the scene and the half-frozen spectators once more forgetting their misery in the excitement and suspense of those two final periods. Science went to the discard now, however, and it was every man for himself. Both teams tried desperately to score by hook or by crook. Penalties came fast and furious, and at one time each team was reduced to five players! The whistle shrilled constantly for off-side plays. The puck was swept up the rink and back again. Shots from the very middle of the ice were frequently attempted and seldom rolled past the points. The players became so weary that they could scarcely keep their feet under them. Substitutes dropped over the boards and first-string players wobbled off with hanging heads and trailing sticks. And all the time Yardley at the barriers cheered and shouted and implored a victory. But it was not to be. One period ended, the teams changed their goals and the next began. Toby, finding it hard now to see the puck at any distance, screwed his eyes up and

GUARDING HIS GOAL

peered anxiously every minute. But only three times in the last ten minutes was his skill called into play and none of the shots which thumped against his pads was difficult to stop. At the other end of the rink, the opposing goal-tend had an even easier time, for Yardley was seldom threatening. And then, suddenly, the whistle shrilled for the last time and the game was over. And Yardley and Rock Hill gathered in two little groups in the fast-gathering darkness and limply and weakly cheered for each other. And although the Blue hadn't won, and although she pretended to be downcast over the result, she was nevertheless secretly very well satisfied with the inconclusive contest, because, just between you and me, Rock Hill had outplayed her in every position save one. And that one position was goal.

CHAPTER XXI

THE RESCUE

TOBY rather dreaded meeting Frank Lamson after that game. Now that he had conquered, and something told him that, barring accidents, he was certain of the goal position for the rest of the season, the victory seemed much less glorious. In spite of himself, for he tried to be stern and judicial, he was sorry for Frank. Of course Frank didn't deserve any sympathy; no fellow did who was guilty of what Frank was guilty of; but, just the same, the sympathy was there and Toby had to sort of put his heel on it every now and then to keep it from rising up and making him uncomfortable. If only Frank hadn't been so — so sort of decent of late, it would have been easier! But when a fellow seeks you out and shows plainly that he likes to talk to you, why, it's hard not to entertain a sneaking liking for him! And, besides that, Frank was Arnold's friend, and in spite of the

GUARDING HIS GOAL

fact that everything was quite all over between Toby and Arnold and they were never, never going to speak to each other again, Toby still had a weak dislike of doing anything to hurt Arnold's feelings. Of course it was silly and all that, but there it was! On the whole, Toby wasn't nearly as happy that Saturday evening as he should have been, considering the fact that the whole school was talking about him playing and giving him every bit of credit that was to be given for staving off a defeat at the hands of Rock Hill.

The meeting which he dreaded didn't take place until the next day. It was rumored that evening that Frank Lamson had been taken sick and had had to leave the rink, which accounted for the fact that he hadn't been available when wanted to substitute Toby. As no one guessed the emotions of anger and outrage which had prompted Frank's retirement, the explanation was accepted at face value. It is possible that Frank, having recovered his temper, made that explanation to Mr. Loring. I don't know as to that. But I do know that Frank was back at practice on Monday very much as though nothing had happened.

It was Monday noon when ~~Toby~~, taking a

THE RESCUE

short-cut from the village, encountered Frank and Arnold on the foot-path that leads up the Prospect. He didn't see them until he was nearly on them and it was then too late to turn back or avoid them. Toby, conscious of the blood flowing to his cheeks, would have nodded and muttered a greeting and gone on, but Frank was of another mind. Frank didn't look particularly amiable, possibly because he had been in the midst of an indignant tirade against Coach Loring, and Toby wanted very, very much to keep right on. He couldn't, though, because Frank deliberately barred his path.

"Hello, Toby," he said growlingly. "I suppose you're feeling pretty big to-day, eh? A regular hero and all that, what?"

"No, I'm not feeling big at all," he answered. Arnold had drawn back a step or two and was looking down the hill. "I heard you were sick yesterday, Frank. I hope you're all right to-day."

"I was sick of the way I was treated," answered the other sharply. "I haven't got anything against you, Toby. It wasn't your fault, I guess. You tried to get it away from me, and you

GUARDING HIS GOAL

had a right to. That's nothing. But that fool Loring didn't have any right to yank me out of there without saying anything, did he? I guess I'd been playing pretty good hockey, hadn't I? How would you have felt about it if they'd treated you like that?"

"I—I suppose I shouldn't have liked it," murmured Toby uncomfortably, embarrassedly conscious of Arnold's presence.

"I'll bet you wouldn't! That's no way to treat fellows. I've done good work all winter for them, played the best I knew how, and that's what I get for it! They just drop me without a word! Crowell says that Loring's the whole push now and that he didn't have anything to do with it. He's afraid I'll make trouble for him, I guess. And maybe I will, too."

"I dare say he will put you back again to-morrow," ventured Toby not very truthfully.

"Yes, he will—not! I wouldn't go back! I'm through! Arn's been talking about duty to the school and all that rot. I'll bet he wouldn't think so much about that if they'd dropped him like a hot potato!"

Toby tried to edge past. "I'm sorry, Frank,"

THE RESCUE

he murmured. "Of course, I wanted the place and tried for it, but —"

Arnold sniffed and spoke for the first time. "Don't be a hypocrite," he sneered. "You're just awfully sorry, aren't you? All cut up about it, I guess!"

"I *am* sorry," declared Toby stoutly. "It isn't my fault if Mr. Loring —"

"That's a coward's trick, to hide behind some one else," broke in Arnold.

"Meaning that I'm a coward?" demanded Toby, hotly.

"You may make it mean what you like!"

"Oh, come now, Arn," Frank put in soothingly, "Toby's all right. I'm not saying anything, am I?"

"That's twice you've called me a coward," said Toby, his blue eyes flashing. "You'll take it back, Arnold, before I ever speak to you again!" He brushed past Frank and went on hurriedly up the path, deaf to the latter's appeal to "wait a minute!"

It was all through with and finished now, he reflected miserably. He had stood from Arnold just all any fellow could stand! A coward, was

GUARDING HIS GOAL

he? Well, he would show them! He didn't know just how he was to show them, but that would come later. Until Arnold begged his pardon he would never speak to him or have a thing to do with him! It wasn't until he was safe behind the closed door of Number 22, with his eyes a little bit wet for some reason, that he recalled Doctor Collins' advice. Then he told himself ruefully: "It's just like I said. The trouble with controlling your temper is that you don't remember about it until it's too late!"

March approached with a week of severely cold weather during which the river froze nearly eight inches thick and at night cracked like the report of a pistol. No more snow came and the shri'l north-west winds 'howling against Toby's windows forced him to wrap his legs in his over-coat when he sat down to study. Hockey went on unremittingly, but there were some days when it was cruelly cold on the rink and playing goal was none too pleasant. Toby was thankful for those warm gloves then. The school hockey championship was decided on the river, the Second Class Team winning the final contest handily from the First. Toby retained his place as first-

THE RESCUE

choice goal-tend and Frank Lamson made a fine pretense of indifference and treated Toby as good-naturedly as ever. But it wasn't difficult to see that Frank still had hopes of winning his position back, for he played hard and earnestly. The morning practice with Grover Beech came to an end two days before the Greenburg High School game on the advice of Coach Loring.

"You're getting enough work in the afternoons now, Tucker," he said, "and there's such a thing as overdoing it."

Toby wasn't very sorry, for the contests of skill between him and Beech had become one-sided, since Toby learned more every day and Beech seemed incapable of further progress in the gentle art of shooting goals. With the yielding of full authority to Mr. Loring by Captain Crowell things soon began to look brighter on the rink. The fellows, bothered not a little before by having two masters, settled down to following the coach's directions with far more enthusiasm. There were no other changes made in the line-up, for Casement had failed to show any better work than Arnold Deering at right wing. Dan Henry had long since given up hope of returning to the

GUARDING HIS GOAL

game that winter and was helping coach the second team goal-tends and occasionally refereed the practice games. Toby threw himself heart and soul into learning and retaining his captured position. It was well for him that he had something so absorbing, for he was not very happy just now, and hockey and lessons — for whatever happened he had to maintain a good class standing — kept his thoughts off his quarrel with Arnold.

The Greenburg High School game was played in Greenburg and the return match was an easy matter for Yardley. Toby played most of the game, and then gave way to Frank Lamson. Coach Loring began to put in his substitutes early in the second period and when the contest ended, with the score 11 to 3 in Yardley's favor, not a first-string man was on the ice. All things considered, the substitutes did very well, scoring four goals against Greenburg's really excellent defense. That contest was the last before the final game with Broadwood and only four work-outs remained. The reports from the rival school proved pretty conclusively that Broadwood had one of the best sevens in the history of the dual

THE RESCUE

league, and it was thoroughly realized at Yardley that if the Pennimore Cup was to return to the trophy room there, the Blue would have to put up a better game than she had done so far all season, but Captain Crowell was hopeful and Coach Loring fairly radiated optimism, and the players took their cue from their leaders. A month before no one would have seriously predicted a Yardley victory, but now the tendency was rather toward over-confidence. And overconfidence, as we know, is a dangerous thing.

Toby managed to contract a slight cold the Saturday of the Greenburg game, probably because he had too little to do to allow of his keeping warm, and it got worse on Sunday night and kept him out of practice Monday. Nor was it very much better the next day, although he reported for work and played through the first period and about ten minutes of the second. The following morning he felt, to use his own expression, just like a stuffed owl, and he had to drag himself to recitations and between them sat wrapped in sweater and coat in his room and tried to see how many of his small store of handkerchiefs he could use up! After dinner, a tasteless meal to Toby, he

GUARDING HIS GOAL

sought the school doctor and was appropriately dosed and instructed to keep away from the rink that afternoon. "Wrap yourself up warmly," said the doctor, "and stay out of doors, but don't get overheated. Fresh air is the best cure for a cold, my boy."

So Toby got himself excused from practice and, after his last recitation, donned his sweater and tied a muffler around his throat and went out for a walk. It wasn't a very invigorating sort of day, for on Sunday the weather had changed and for two days a mild south-westerly breeze had been blowing in from the Sound, causing dire apprehension on the part of the hockey men. Already the river below Loon Island showed stretches of open water and ice-cakes were floating down past the bridges and into the unfrozen Sound. It was a moist, cloudy afternoon and Toby's feet lagged as he struck down-hill toward the little village. Wissining had one store, a general emporium that sold everything a fellow didn't want and nothing he did. Still, one could buy pencils there, and Toby needed one, and it didn't make much difference in which direction he walked. After the purchase he went on along the road that parallels

THE RESCUE

the track and eventually leads to the footbridge to Greenburg. When he got in sight of the river he was surprised to see to what extent the ice had broken up since yesterday, or even since morning. Unless the weather grew cold again within the next two days that Broadwood game would never be played next Saturday.

Toby stood on the bridge a few moments watching the ice-cakes swirl under, turning and dipping, or pile up against the piers, and then, mindful of the doctor's instruction, he took the road along the river and wandered down toward the Point. The river widens as it nears the Sound, and to-day, with the tide running out hard and strong and the ice-cakes moving seaward it was worth watching. He had the road pretty much to himself, for Wissining is not a populous village and the day was not such as to attract many folks out of doors, and he plodded on through melting snow and rotting ice and plain brown mud until the big wrought-iron gates of the Pennimore estate blocked his further progress. From that point he could look westward along the Sound for several miles, and he paused a minute and watched a schooner dipping her way along under the brisk

GUARDING HIS GOAL

wind, and a coal steamer churning slowly eastward. Then he turned back and retraced his steps, since there was no alternate road, and had reached a point near the little ferry house, long since abandoned to time and weather, when a faint cry fell on his ears.

Toby looked about him and saw no one save a man driving a wagon across the bridge nearly a quarter of a mile upstream. Across the river were a few shanties and although there was no one in sight it was probable that the shout had come from there. Toby went on his way, not quite satisfied, however, for the cry, as faint as it had been, had sounded like an appeal for help. And then, before he had taken a dozen steps, it came again, louder this time and seemingly closer at hand. Toby's gaze swept the opposite shore, traveled up the river —

What was that between him and the bridge? A boat? No, it didn't look like a boat. It was a darkish spot apparently in the water, but surely no one would be silly enough to attempt to swim there! And then he realized. In the middle of the river, turning and dipping, floated an ice-cake and on it, stretched face-downward, was the form

THE RESCUE

of a boy! Hardly crediting his sight, Toby stood and stared. But there was no deception. The ice-cake and its imperiled burden was floating nearer and nearer and the cries, shrill and terror-stricken, came plainly now across the water. Now and then the frail expanse of ice tipped dangerously and Toby could see the boy strive frantically to adjust his body to the slant, to keep the ice-cake from turning over. One hand clutched desperately at an edge and the other was stretched on the slippery surface. Straight for the open water of the Sound it floated, and, as Toby well knew, the boy could never stay on it a moment after it reached the rough water. Toby's first act was entirely involuntary. He rushed to the edge of the embankment, slipping and tripping on the ice, put his hands to his mouth and sent his voice across the space.

"All right!" he shouted. "Hold on! I'm coming!"

But that was easier promised than performed, as he realized the next moment with a sinking heart. At least sixty yards would separate him from the ice-cake when it floated opposite. If he risked it and succeeded, he might crawl out on

GUARDING HIS GOAL

the stationary ice along the shore and cut that distance down by half, but even then he would be no better off. He had no rope to throw and could not have thrown it so far in any event. To swim would be foolhardy, for even if he managed to make his way through the loose ice as far as the boy he would never be able to bring him ashore. A boat, then, was the only hope, and not a boat was in sight on his side of the river. Nearer and nearer came the ice-cake with its living cargo, colliding with other cakes, swaying and twisting and dipping, every moment threatening to upheave one side or another and drop its burden into the icy waters. Toby thought desperately, looked helplessly about him. And then his gaze fell on the little dismantled ferry house and he raced down the bank toward it, hoping against hope.

The door on the water side was half off, sprawling on its rusted hinges, and at first glance the dim interior seemed empty. But at first glance only, for, as Toby's eyes became accustomed to the gloom, they descried a boat, tilted on its side, and what looked like the handle of an oar protruding over the edge. How he pulled that skiff

THE RESCUE

from the old ferry house to the landing and then over yards of creaking, swaying ice he never knew. But somehow he did it, and somehow, just as he and the boat sank through yielding ice, he managed to scramble into it, to seize one of the oars and push off. Rowing was out of the question as yet, for his strength was spent and the ice, bobbing about in huge fragments, prevented his dipping the blades in water. But, sobbing for very weariness, he knelt and pushed, prodding at an edge or a crevice, and so at last made his way into clearer water and then looked anxiously upstream.

For an instant his heart sank leadenly, for the boy was nowhere in sight. He was too late! But the next moment he saw him, already abreast and moving fast toward the mouth of the river. Toby, with a gasp of relief, fitted the oars to the ancient thole-pins and rowed his hardest.

He was a good hand in a boat, was Toby, otherwise he would never have won that race through the ice-floes. The boat leaked like a sieve and he wondered long before he reached his goal whether it would keep afloat long enough to reach shore again. Ice-cakes swept down against the skiff and fairly staggered it. When he saw them in

GUARDING HIS GOAL

time Toby tried to fend them off with an oar, but rowing was the main necessity, for the boy on the ice-cake was going fast, and he must take his chances with the floes. For many minutes or so it seemed to Toby, the skiff failed to gain, but at last it caught the current in the middle of the stream and then, with Toby pulling as he had never pulled before, it began to gain. The water was already getting rougher and every moment the boy's predicament became more perilous. Only once did Toby waste precious breath on encouragement. Then he shouted over his shoulder:

“Coming! Hold on a little longer!”

Followed some desperate minutes and then victory! Toby avoided a floe many yards in diameter, letting it pass while he fended the skiff away from it, and then dug the blades of his oars. An instant later the side of the skiff grated against the ice-cake and Toby pushed an oar across its surface. “Catch hold,” he panted, “and pull yourself toward me!”

The boy obeyed, but Toby realized the courage required to release the hold of those half-frozen fingers on the cake of ice. The boy grasped



"COMING! HOLD ON A LITTLE LONGER!"

THE RESCUE

the oar and, still face-downwards, moved cautiously, fearfully toward the skiff. As his weight moved toward the edge, the ice-cake, scarcely three yards across at the widest place, began to dip.

"*Faster!*" cried Toby. "Grab the side of the boat!"

Over turned the ice-cake and the boy's body settled with it into the water, but one straining hand was on the gunwale and Toby had secured a tight hold on his jacket. The skiff careened as the ice-cake slowly righted again, Toby pulled with every ounce of strength remaining in his body and, somehow, the boy came sprawling, inch by inch, into the boat to lie finally face-up in six inches of water on the bottom while Toby, scarcely knowing what he did, fixed his oars again and pulled mechanically for the shore. And as he labored with lungs bursting, muscles aching and eyes half-closed the perfectly absurd thought came to him that Tommy Lingard's clothes would certainly need pressing to-morrow!

CHAPTER XXII

THINGS COME OUT ALL RIGHT

IT was Saturday afternoon. Toby lay in bed in Number 22, very glad to be home again after two days of the unfamiliar and monotonous white walls of the infirmary. They had brought him home — for the little, poorly furnished room was home, after all — that forenoon, and he had partaken of a perfectly sumptuous dinner, the first in several days, and had gone peacefully to sleep after it. But he was wide awake now and feeling very comfortable and contented and beautifully rested. He had been, they had told him, a pretty sick boy for a day or so after Mr. Pennimore's gardener and another man had rescued him and Tommy Lingard from a sinking boat at the mouth of the river. (For it seemed, although Toby didn't pretend to understand it, that he had lost all sense of direction and had rowed toward the Sound. Either that or his tired arms had not been able to prevail over the cur-

THINGS COME OUT ALL RIGHT

rent.) But he was quite all right now. Of course, his head hurt a bit and his cold wasn't quite all gone, and he was still a little stiff in places, but aside from those failings he felt fine!

The window was open a trifle and through it came sounds that brought a puzzled frown to Toby's forehead. They seemed to suggest something not so pleasant as being at home again in his own bed. Then he remembered and the frown disappeared. They were playing Broadwood down there on the rink and if all this had not happened he would have been there too, guarding his goal in the big game of the year. But, somehow, he didn't care so awfully much. Frank would play in his place, and Frank deserved it. He owed Frank at least that much reparation for the unjust suspicions he had of him. On the whole, he was glad that Frank had got the position back again, and he only hoped that he would play such a dandy game there that the hated Broadwood would go home scoreless!

Thinking of Frank sent his thoughts back to the afternoon before when a very pale and timid Tommy Lingard had been shown in to him in the infirmary and had haltingly muttered thanks for

GUARDING HIS GOAL

his rescue and then, after much hesitation and many false starts, had cleared up the mystery of the stolen Hockey Fund. He had owed Frank Lamson some money and Frank had asked him for it that very night he had left his clothes to be cleaned, threatening all sorts of awful punishments if he didn't pay it up on the morrow. And he had seen Toby go to the drawer of his bureau to make change that night and so knew of the money kept there. The next morning he had gone to Number 22 when he knew that Toby would be in a class-room and taken box and contents and so paid his debt to Frank Lamson. He hadn't looked carefully at the money and had failed to notice the marked quarter or the patched dollar bill, and when Toby had asked about the latter he had told the first lie occurring to him. And he was awfully sorry about it and would pay it all back, every cent, and he only wished he could do it that minute because when a fellow saves your life, like Toby had saved his —

The sound of triumphant cheering came up from the distant rink, borne on the nipping little westerly breeze. Toby thrilled and wondered how the game was going. He *would* like to have

THINGS COME OUT ALL RIGHT

played, after all! But he owed that much to Frank, and so it had all happened for the best. And by now — long before this, probably — Frank had got the note he had written that morning and dispatched by the goody, in which he had told of his suspicions and of the evidence leading to them and had humbly asked Frank's pardon. And after awhile, perhaps, Frank would come up to see him and tell him it was all right, and — and maybe he would tell Arnold and Arnold would come, too. Toby had wanted very much to write Arnold as well; he tried several times; but he wasn't very much of a letter-writer yet and the things he wanted to say had got all mixed up and confused and he had had to give it up. But Arnold would come sooner or later. He was sure of that, for Arnold knew now that he wasn't a coward and Frank would tell him that he had written and apologized —

Another wild pæan of joy from the rink interrupted his thoughts. He glanced at the clock on the bureau and to his surprise found that it was nearly four! Why, then, the game must soon be over! If only Yardley might win it he wouldn't care at all that he hadn't been able to

GUARDING HIS GOAL

play. Or, at least, not much. He had rather wanted to get his letters and the crossed hockey sticks between, but there was another year coming, and so that, too, was quite all right.

Why, the cheering was getting nearer! The game must be over then! And—and Yardley surely had won, else why should they cheer so? The fellows were marching back from the rink. He could hear quite plainly now, catch each word of the old familiar cheer: "*Rah, rah, rah!* *Rah, rah, rah!* *Rah, rah, rah!* *Yardley!* *Yardley!*" They were at the gymnasium probably. Yes, they were cheering the players! He heard the long-drawn "*Crumbie-e-e!*"

"We *must* have won!" he cried, sitting up suddenly in bed. "We *must* have!"

Footsteps pounded the stairs and hurried along the corridor and Toby's heart raced. Eager voices sounded in the corridor, came nearer! There was a knock on the door and Toby, trying to say "Come in!" couldn't. But it didn't matter for the door swung open at once and in came Arnold and Frank, still in hockey togs, red-cheeked, bright-eyed, bringing a breath of the

THINGS COME OUT ALL RIGHT

frosty outdoors with them. It was Arnold who spoke first, Arnold falling to his knees beside the bed and throwing one arm across Toby's body.

"We won, chum!" he cried. "Four to two! It was great! And old Frank played a wonderful game —"

"Not as good as Toby would have," interpolated Frank with conviction from the foot of the bed.

"And Loring told me to tell you," continued Arnold breathlessly, unheeding of interruption, "that you're to get your hockey letters, T. Tucker!" Arnold paused then and his face sobered. Finally, in lower tones he said: "Frank's told me, Toby, and I don't blame you for thinking what you did. He doesn't either. And I'm sorry, awfully sorry, that I — I acted the way I did, and called you — what I did. You believe me, don't you?"

Toby only nodded. He wanted to speak but — well, a nod was easier! Arnold's hand found his on the coverlid and grasped it tightly.

"I wanted to make up long ago, Toby," he whispered, "but — but I was just a plain, rotten brute."

GUARDING HIS GOAL

Toby shook his head vehemently, but Arnold wouldn't have it.

"Yes, I was, chum! A regular brute. Frank told me so a dozen times. But — but it's all right now, isn't it?"

"Yes," answered Toby happily. "It's *all* right!"

From the direction of the gymnasium came another long cheer: "*Rah, rah, rah!* *Rah, rah, rah!* *Rah, rah, rah!* *Tucker!*"

Toby, hearing, smiled contentedly. "I guess," he murmured, "most everything comes out all right if you'll just let it!"

(1)

THE END



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